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Common Ground

ISSUE 171 • OCTOBER 2005 • FREE

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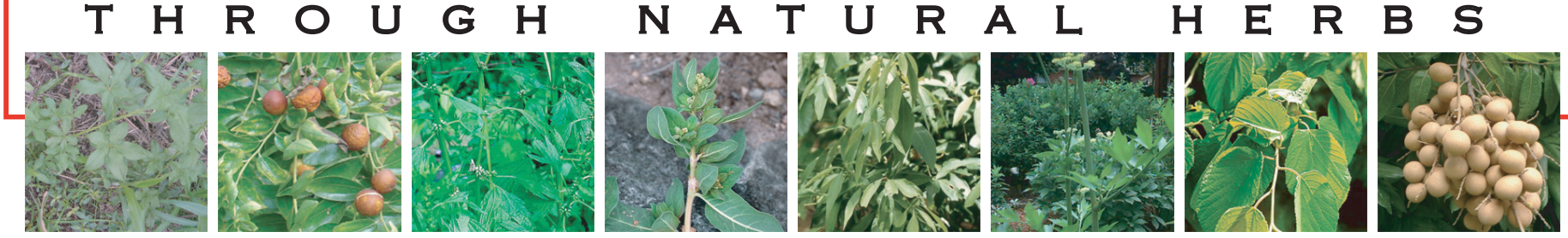

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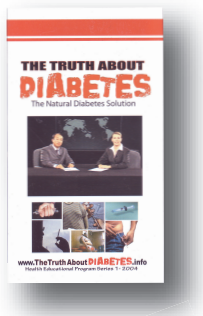

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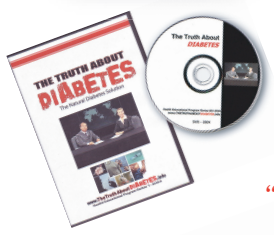

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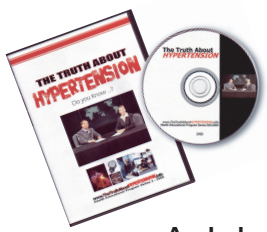

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Common Ground

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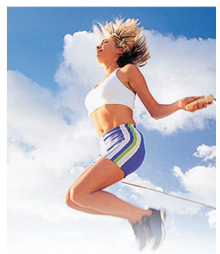

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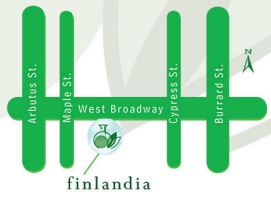

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Boost your libido naturally

by Chris Kilham

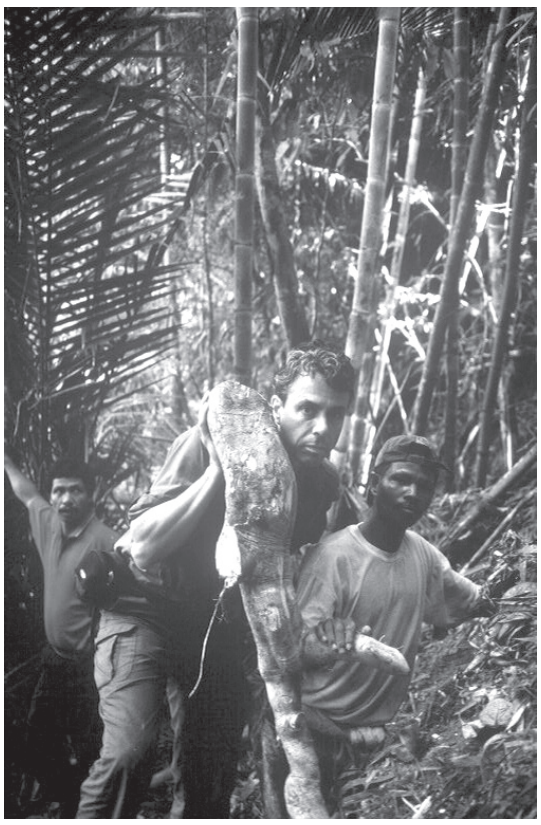
Medicine hunter, author, and educator Chris Kilham has conducted medicinal plant research throughout the world. Kilham is explorer in residence at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where he teaches ethnobotany. He has written 13 books, including Psyche Delicacies; Tales From the Medicine Trail; Kava; Medicine Hunting in Paradise; *and* Hot Plants.

In densely shaded greenery in the sweltering hot Malaysian rainforest, I watched three aboriginal men chop a mature tongkat ali root, one of the most powerful aphrodisiac plants on Earth, out of dense soil. Researching sex-enhancing plants often puts me in marvellous and remote places, and in this instance, the trail led me to Malaysia to research tongkat ali.

The sex doctor

In the Malaysian capitol of Kuala Lumpur, I met with Dr. Ismail Tambi, who runs the Human Reproduction Specialist Centre. Dr. Tamby is one of Southeast Asia's foremost experts in the field of reproductive health, and the leading medical expert on the effects of tongkat ali root extract on human subjects. In his work with men, Dr. Tamby found that tongkat ali extract significantly increases testosterone production. "In our studies, we found that tongkat ali extract increased the serum level of testosterone considerably." I asked Dr. Tamby if the men in his study experienced renewed sexual vitality, or heightened sexual desire. "Oh, yes, most definitely. The men found that tongkat ali boosted their sex drive quite a lot. I think that for low libido, tongkat ali extract is very valuable. I have seen this result for myself, and can say that this plant really works." I asked Dr. Tamby if the same would apply to women, who secrete only about five to 10 percent as much testosterone as men. "Yes, it certainly should boost libido in women as well, as testosterone is essential to a woman's sexual desire. Women have used tongkat ali for a very long time in this culture," he added.

Dr. Tamby conducted the PADAM study, in which he investigated partial androgen deficiency in males. He selected 30 adult males of various ages, assessed their testosterone levels, and gave them 100 mg of tongkat ali extract daily. In all the subjects, testosterone levels rose, resulting in a 91 percent improvement in libido, a reported 73 percent improvement in sexual function, and an 82 percent psychological improvement, relative to sex, among the men who participated in the study.



Chris Kilham in Malaysia with a tongkat ali root

The testosterone builder

Tongkat ali holds up brilliantly under close, scientific scrutiny. The root contains a plethora of beneficial compounds, including potent, protective antioxidants that inhibit cellular aging. Other phytochemicals have anti-viral, anti-malarial, and anti-cancerous properties, and some combat high blood pressure and quell dysentery. Quassinoids in the root prove twice as potent as aspirin against fevers.

Nonetheless, what excites most people about tongkat ali is that the root significantly boosts sex drive and function in both men and women, by building testosterone. Glycoproteins appear to be the sex-promoting ingredients in the plant. This discovery, and years of painstaking research, is the work of Dr. Johari Saad, or King of Tongkat Ali, as he is commonly known.

Increasing testosterone is the big objective from a sex drive standpoint. Testosterone is the most important of the male sex hormones, which are known as androgens, and produced in the gonads. Testosterone plays a key role in the development and maturity of male sex organs and promotes secondary sex characteristics including the appearance of facial hair, enlargement of the larynx (producing a deeper voice), sexual desire, and sexual behaviour. However, testosterone is not just a sex booster for men. In women, this vital hormone also fans the flames of ardour, and increases sensitivity in the erogenous zones. In both sexes, testosterone stimulates metabolism, promotes lipogenesis (burning of fat), increases the formation of red blood cells, and accelerates muscle growth.

From age 30 or so, blood levels of the hormone decline at a rate of about two percent per year; the level varies from person to person. Regular exercise can help somewhat, but those who smoke or drink heavily will lose more of this hormone more quickly. For both sexes, sex drive, function, fat metabolism, and energy all decline into middle age, as blood testosterone drops.

In addition to boosting testosterone levels, Dr. Johari also found that tongkat ali extract inhibits sex hormone binding globulin. By inhibiting this agent, more free testosterone remains in the blood, which additionally stems the aging process, improves energy and sexual function, helps to reduce body fat, and reduces risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease.

Using tongkat ali

Dr. Johari, and other experts involved with this plant, recommend around 100 milligrams of concentrated tongkat ali standardized to approximately 22 percent glycoproteins daily for men, and around 50 milligrams for women.

Tongkat ali is the popular name for *Eurycoma longifolia*, a medium-size, slender tree reaching 10 metres in height. The name tongkat ali means "ali's walking stick." The plant is also commonly called longjack. Tongkat ali is native to Malaysia, lower Burma, Thailand, and Indonesia. The root is employed as a traditional remedy for the treatment of malaria, high blood pressure, fevers, fatigue, loss of sexual desire, and impotence. Tongkat ali enjoys both a long history of traditional use, and a growing body of serious science corroborating its efficacy.

The difficulty of harvesting tongkat ali in the wild is a very good reason to cultivate the trees in plantations. Additionally, as this traditional plant remedy becomes more popular, supplies of tongkat ali in the wild will inevitably decrease. Over time, this tree could become endangered. To preserve the natural environment, and to protect remaining wild specimens of tongkat ali, Malaysia is currently establishing *Eurycoma longifolia* plantations. The Malaysian government is enthusiastic about the future of tongkat ali, and is providing economic support for its development.

Chris Kilham gives the keynote address at the 12th annual Vancouver Health Show, October 29, 1:30-3 pm, Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre. The VHS runs October 29-30. For more information, please call 800-471-1112, or visit www.healthshows.com

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Rewrite your body's owner's manual

by Sam Graci

Long before we become ill, our bodies send strong signals that something is wrong," states Dr. Joey Shulman, a chiropractor and nutritionist. Before you feel the first chest pain of heart disease, find yourself challenged by cancer, become forgetful, or need a hip replacement, the 100 trillion cells in your body and mind cry out daily for help and intervention.

The potential, in terms of enhancing and restoring human health and well-being, is nothing short of spectacular. We human beings have a great deal more power to control our own destinies than we ever imagined. You can witness an astounding revitalizing and rejuvenating transformation in yourself.

The old approach was to deal with and tackle one ailment at a time – unfortunately, after the fact. Like a stack of dominoes or a house of cards, one by one, each system topples. "Aging is not a single 'quick fix' linear progression, but a group of interrelated biological processes," states MD Carolyn DeMarco. However, for the first time in the experience of our human species, medical science, backed by accumulating evidence, suggests that illness, disease, and dementia are not an inevitable part of life, nor necessarily a consequence of growing older. How long does your car last? The answer obviously depends on how well you take care of it.

Be grateful you are alive. Learning, growing and transforming today accomplishes half the job. To better handle tomorrow's challenges is our full-time job. We must transform and become wiser and healthier every single day for a lifetime. This is the ultimate example of the power of emotional self-perpetuation.

Most of the time, our physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual balance is maintained automatically, but there are many days when we must rebalance ourselves. Balance is wellness, and to be unbalanced is to be unwell. In nature, all living systems and energy fields maintain themselves through a continuous give and take, expansion and contraction. Foods, moods, and lifestyle choices do just that. They expand or contract our energy and emotions; they acidify or alkalize us. The pendulum swing of our cellular metabolism between those opposites is what keeps us more or less stable. If the pendulum stays too long on one side, our physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual balance is disrupted and we feel unwell. Stay balanced. It is as simple as that.

Illness, disease, and dementia are not an inevitable part of life, nor necessarily a consequence of growing older. How long does your car last? The answer obviously depends on how well you take care of it.

Pursuit of human excellence, in just one of our energy centres, whether mental, physical, emotional or spiritual, is not sufficient. Excellence in one of these energy regulators is not a fix or an antidote for poor performance in any other area. All of our energy centres must work "synergistically." The total benefits gained by applying positive change and transformation in all four centres are exponentially greater than the benefits of any one alone.

You must take advantage of the learning potential from everyday challenges. No matter what dilemmas or quandaries we face – health crises, relationship issues, financial stress, social challenges, emotional turmoil, anger, rage, cynicism, disappointment, natural catastrophes, and global challenges of our time – we can always pursue and find a noble idea. We can implement this noble idea, and we, as the blessed human species, can prevail with love, optimism, hope, motivation, patience, and endless effort.

Amazingly, we can work with, and overcome, these necessary life challenges for a civilization-wide, worthwhile and achievable goal – the remarkable pursuit of human excellence. George Bernard Shaw stated it nicely when he said, "We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing." We can see a glimmer of light in darkness and a ray of hope in hopelessness.

Photo by Karen Whylie.

Sam Graci, author of The Path to Phenomenal Health.

Keep mind-body balanced

Mounting evidence clearly indicates that our moods can be the first indicators that we are out of balance. Psychosomatic illness, a long-accepted category of modern medicine and psychology, is one in which bodily dysfunction is caused by mental or emotional conditions like stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia, loneliness and staleness, with no meaningful direction in our life.

But the reverse is equally true. Our body's condition affects our mental or emotional states with similar intensity. For example, hunger can cause moodiness, an energy crisis, and aggression; a lack of sleep causes poor memory; and a lack of EPA omega-3 essential fats causes

continued on page 32

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Dissolving the pain-body

THE POWER OF NOW *by Eckhart Tolle*

As long as you are unable to access the power of the Now, every emotional pain that you experience leaves behind a residue of pain. It merges with past pain and lodges in your mind and body. This accumulated pain is a negative energy field, and if you look upon it as an invisible entity in its own right, you are getting quite close to the truth. It's the emotional pain-body. It has two modes of being: dormant and active. A pain-body may be dormant 90 percent of the time; in a deeply unhappy person, it may be active up to 100 percent of the time.

Some people live almost entirely through the pain-body, while others experience it only in certain situations, such as in intimate relationships, or situations linked with past loss, abandonment, and physical or emotional hurt. Anything can trigger it, particularly if it resonates with a pain pattern from your past. When it is ready to awaken from its dormant stage, even a thought or an innocent remark can activate it.

Pain can only feed on pain. Pain cannot feed on joy. It finds it quite indigestible.

Some pain-bodies are obnoxious but relatively harmless – a child who won't stop whining, for example. Others are vicious and destructive monsters. Some are physically violent; many more are emotionally violent. Some will attack people around you, while others may attack you, their host. Your thoughts and feelings about your life then become deeply negative and self-destructive. Illnesses and accidents are often created in this way. Some pain-bodies drive their hosts to suicide.

When you thought you knew a person and are suddenly confronted with this alien, nasty creature for the first time, you are in for quite a shock. However, it's more important to observe it in yourself. Watch out for any sign of unhappiness; it may be the awakening pain-body. This can take the form of irritation, impatience, a sombre mood, a desire to hurt, anger, rage, depression, or a need to have some drama in your relationship. Catch it the moment it awakens.

The pain-body wants to survive, just like every other entity in existence, and it can only survive through your unconscious identification. It needs to get its food through you. It will feed on any experience that resonates with its own kind of energy, anything that creates further pain. When it has taken you over, it will create a situation in your life that reflects its own energy frequency for it to feed on. Pain can only feed on pain. Pain cannot feed on joy. It finds it quite indigestible.

Once the pain-body has taken you over, you want more pain. You become a victim, or a perpetrator, or both; there really isn't much difference. You are unconscious of this, of course, and will vehemently claim that you do not want pain. But look closely, and you will find that your thinking and behaviour keep the pain going. If you were truly conscious of it, the pattern would dissolve, for to want more pain is insanity, and nobody is consciously insane.

The pain-body, the dark shadow cast by the ego, is actually afraid of the light of your consciousness. It is afraid of being found out. Its survival depends on your unconscious identification and unconscious fear of facing your pain. But if you don't face it, you will be forced to relive it again and again. The pain-body may seem like a dangerous monster that you cannot bear to look at, but I assure you that it is an insubstantial phantom that cannot prevail against the power of your presence.

Some spiritual teachings state that all pain is ultimately an illusion, and this is true. The question is: "Is it true for you?" A mere belief doesn't make it true. Do you want to experience pain for the rest of your life and keep saying that it is an illusion? Does that free you from the pain? What we are concerned with here is how you can realize this truth – that is, make it real in your own experience.

The pain-body doesn't want you to observe it directly and see it for what it is. The moment you observe it, the identification is broken. A higher dimension of consciousness has come in. I call it presence. You are now the witness, or the watcher of the pain-body. It can no longer use you by pretending to be you, and it can no longer replenish itself through you. You have found your own innermost strength. You have accessed the power of Now.

Adapted from The Power of Now by Eckhart Tolle, $14 US, $15.75 Canada, trade paperback, New World Library and Namaste Publishing. www.newworldlibrary.com, www.namastepublishing.com

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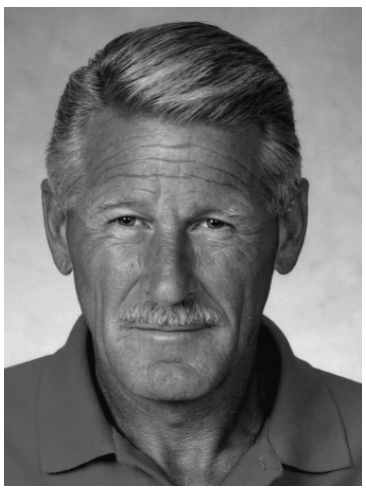

Sri Gary Olsen,
Spiritual Leader of MasterPath

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Children and wings

UNIVERSE WITHIN *by Gwen Randall-Young*

Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did… So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

– Mark Twain

Recently, my daughter jumped out of an airplane. When she had approached me and asked if she could go skydiving for her 21st birthday, my instinctual, protective-mother response was, "no!" If I granted permission and something happened, how would I ever forgive myself?

The adage about giving children wings and letting them fly was suddenly very, very real. When my second daughter was 18, one of her friends had been killed in a car accident, and I was deeply affected by a young life being cut so short. I remembered my vow to let my youngest try anything, and everything, she wanted, so that if she died young, she would have experienced life to the fullest.

I knew that it would be worse to deny her the right to follow her soul's urgings, than to let her go, even if it was the last thing she ever did.

Now, she wanted to jump out of an airplane. It did not take me too long to recognize that my child was not afraid to take risks, and I needed to confront my own fears. Deep down, I knew that it would be worse to deny her the right to follow her soul's urgings, than to let her go, even if it was the last thing she ever did. She is my child, but it is her life.

I had to let her go, both physically and metaphorically. I also needed to support her by sharing her excitement and cheering her on as she honoured her path. I could not, however, be there to watch. She left for the same-day training at six-thirty in the morning, long before I awoke. I had left her a colourful note of love, encouragement, and support, and when I woke up, I noticed it was gone. She had also left me a note saying, "I'll be thinking of you."

Throughout the day, she kept in touch by cell phone. As the hour of the jump approached, I wasn't sure whether I was feeling my own anxiety, or hers. In her phone calls, she described the roller coaster of emotions she felt as she went through the training. She said that she was challenging her own security boundaries; she does not like flying.

I thought about what a neat kid she is. I thought about her eagerness to learn new things, to travel, and to move out of her comfort zone. Most significantly, I realized that she is truly her own person. I felt tremendous pride in both how she has constructed her life, and in her sense of self.

She was the last in her group to jump, and it seemed an eternity until her phone call arrived. She had landed safely. Even more than the exhilaration of the jump, however, I think she was excited about reaching a new level of self-empowerment. She spoke more about the feeling of "I did it!" rather than the experience itself.

The next morning, she explained in detail what it had been like – six of them crouched on the floor of a little plane. She described the strong wind as she ventured out onto the wing, and how she had hung there until she got the go-ahead from the instructor. Describing the descent, she said she had focused more on remembering all the instructions than taking in the view.

All the while, I thought about how each generation is more evolved than the one before. We provide the best role models we can for our children, until, suddenly, one day, we realize that they have become role models for us.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. Additional articles and information about her books and transformational CDs can be found at www.gwen.ca Contact gwendall@shaw.ca

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Gas crisis solutions

NUTRISPEAK

by Vesanto Melina MS, RD

No, not that gas crisis. After all, this is a nutrition column. I'm talking about the challenges that may arise (in fact, which sometimes fill the room) when we switch from low to higher fibre diets.

People are often cautious about getting too full of beans, due to the reputation of these foods in the aroma department. Good news. Unpleasant, gaseous emissions are not the inevitable result of eating beans. Around the world, people eat high-fibre plant foods without any ill effects and derive numerous health benefits. In fact, high-fibre foods reduce constipation, which can be a cause of gas. Yet, if we're to eat more beans, broccoli, and cauliflower, we should draw upon the wisdom of other cultures.

To eliminate potential digestive difficulties, it helps to understand the origins of intestinal gas. Starches and sugars from plant foods are absorbed in the small intestine, leaving the indigestible fibre and shorter, fibre-like molecules to travel along to the large intestine. There, bacteria digest the shorter molecules; one product of this bacterial action can be gas.

To put things into perspective, it proves to be entirely normal and even beneficial to pass some gas. In fact, the Dutch National Liver and Intestine Foundation recommends 15 times per day as the optimal number. Healthy young men break wind 14 to 25 times a day, and women half as often, although most of this passes unnoticed. The US army has developed devices – of course – to conduct research on normal amounts and times. I chuckle when I imagine those privates whose tour of duty involved wearing such a device.

Nonetheless, we all know that sometimes it can be too much, and too nasty. To minimize those moments when you don't know whether to look at each other or blame the dog, here are some potential solutions:

1. Boost your fibre intake gradually. We all have helpful intestinal bacteria that assist in digesting our food; the exact population of bacteria present depends on the kinds of food we eat. When we shift to a healthier diet, it takes time for the right bacteria to become dominant.

2. Start with the legumes that are easiest to digest. These tend to be the smaller ones: split peas, lentils, adzuki beans, and mung beans. They do not require pre-soaking, although soaking may further improve digestibility.

3. Gradually introduce bigger beans. Pre-soak garbanzo, kidney, and beans of similar size, and then discard the soaking water that contains the shorter fibre-like molecules. Add fresh water for cooking, and skim off any foam that arises.

4. Slowly increase your use of legumes over several months. Start with small servings once or twice a week, and gradually increase both the size of the serving and the frequency.

5. Chew legumes well. We digest best when we chew foods thoroughly; enzymes in our saliva begin the process of carbohydrate digestion. This is especially important as we get older and salivary enzyme production decreases.

6. Fructose (fruit sugar), other sugars, and so-called slimming foods can be problematic. You may find that certain combinations, such as dried fruit eaten with foods that are slower to digest, can be volatile.

7. The best help for intestinal function is exercise.

Vesanto Melina is a registered dietitian and author based near Fort Langley. For healthful, delicious recipes and nutrition tips, see her books Becoming Vegetarian; the Food Allergy Survival Guide; Healthy Eating for Life to Prevent and Treat Cancer; Becoming Vegan; *and* Raising Vegetarian Children. *For personal consultations, call 604-888-8325 (clinic) or 604-882-6782 (home). www.nutrispeak.com*

Tips from around the globe

Ingredients in traditional dishes from around the world have benefits far beyond flavour. To improve digestibility, the Japanese add a seaweed called kombu during cooking, which is removed before serving. In India, the herbal extract asafetida (from plants grown in Afghanistan) is sometimes added to cooked foods. Fennel has also been found to be helpful for digestion and is added to curries, bean dishes, and teas. North Americans use an enzyme preparation called Beano that may break down much of the indigestible carbohydrate to absorbable sugars. (Avoid Beano if you are allergic to molds or penicillin.) Latin Americans prevent their gas problems with a herb similar to parsley, called epazoate. It grows wild on the west coast of North America and is a component of many chili powders and a seasoning for bean dishes.

"These sacred texts do not say what should be done once the book is closed. When approached properly, they can provide an instantaneous experience of what they speak about. In the end, there is no difference between the text and the practice; both merge in deep Silence."
– Michel Angot

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DRUG BUST

Cancer drug warrants healthy skepticism

by Alan Cassels

As this is my inaugural column in *Common Ground*, I would like readers to know that I am keenly, almost pathologically, interested in the quality of information people receive about health and drug treatments. I'll draw on my voracious appetite for pharmacojournalism, and use this space to deconstruct some of the prevailing mythology about prescription drugs, which many of us absorb unthinkingly from a variety of sources – popular culture, our doctors, and especially the media. In this column, I hope to deliver a bracing rebuke to much of the hype, and hope, surrounding legal drugs, and encourage readers to develop their powers of healthy skepticism.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month in Canada. This year, it tops off a summer that simmered with scintillating stories of hope for breast cancer victims around the world, due to some new research on a "breakthrough" breast cancer drug, announced earlier this year. The stories that hogged the headlines, and which generated a Katrina-like political storm, concerned the costs of an allegedly life-saving drug called Herceptin. Also known as trastuzumab, Herceptin is used, in conjunction with chemotherapy, on patients who produce an excess of the HERS-2 gene – a particularly virulent form of breast cancer.

The first headlines arrived fast and furious immediately following the American Society of Clinical Oncology conference, an annual hype-generator for manufacturers of cancer drugs. The findings from two Herceptin trials were released, and Herceptin's manufacturer Genentech, in the business of biotechnological research, set the tone with its news release, which announced: "Women with aggressive breast cancer, who took the drug after surgery and chemotherapy, had a 52 percent reduction in the risk of a recurrence, compared with women who did not take the drug."

The media pushed the glee meter into the red zone, with words like "breakthrough," "wonder drug," and "impressive advance," overblown, laudatory adjectives that I admonish journalism students to strenuously avoid.

The breathless headlines quickly morphed – anger replacing hope – as the storyline shifted into what I call the "access phase." The price tag hanging off Genentech's miracle drug was $35,000 to $45,000 per patient annually, or in other words, an additional cost of $150 million to Canada's annual cancer treatment bill. This phase of a wonder drug story draws its emotional force from the perceived scarcity or expense of the new treatment. "Oh no, lifesaving drug X is not available, or is too expensive for patients to get." The Globe summed up the theme with these headlines: "New cancer drug limited to few." "Impressive in cutting disease recurrence, Herceptin still lacks government funding."

Mon dieu! Forty-five thousand dollars is a lot of money, but if it is actually preventing women from dying from breast cancer, it's worth it, right? At least, that's what you'd think listening to the very compelling, personal stories from women who cashed in their RRSPs, and women who travelled to clinics in the US to get a shot at the new treatment. The drama was further spiced with a few quotes from angry doctors who were feeling betrayed that we would put a price on human life. One Canadian cancer doctor stated: "It's a big frustration. As a physician, you are on a sacred mission…and the only reason you are being blocked from that mission is for fiscal reasons." OK, fair enough. But the plot thickens as headlines mount and governments are forced to open our wallets to cover the new treatment. BC is the first province to publicly fund Herceptin, and other provinces are close behind.

The third and final part of the wonder drug story is what I call the "reality check"

continued on page 22

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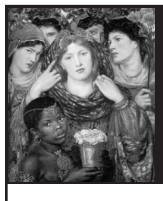

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Gilbert Levin's search for life on Mars

UNSUNG HEROES ***by Geoff Olson***

Can the efforts of one anonymous individual act for the greater good in the far off future? Can a single person, at the right place at the right time, catalyze change on a historic scale? In this series we look at individuals, some known, but others relatively unknown, who accomplished great deeds, far beyond what they may have thought possible themselves. Their accomplishments in the arts, sciences, in the political sphere, or in the service of global peace or justice, have not just burned paths for others to follow; they have inspired others to set out and create paths of their own.

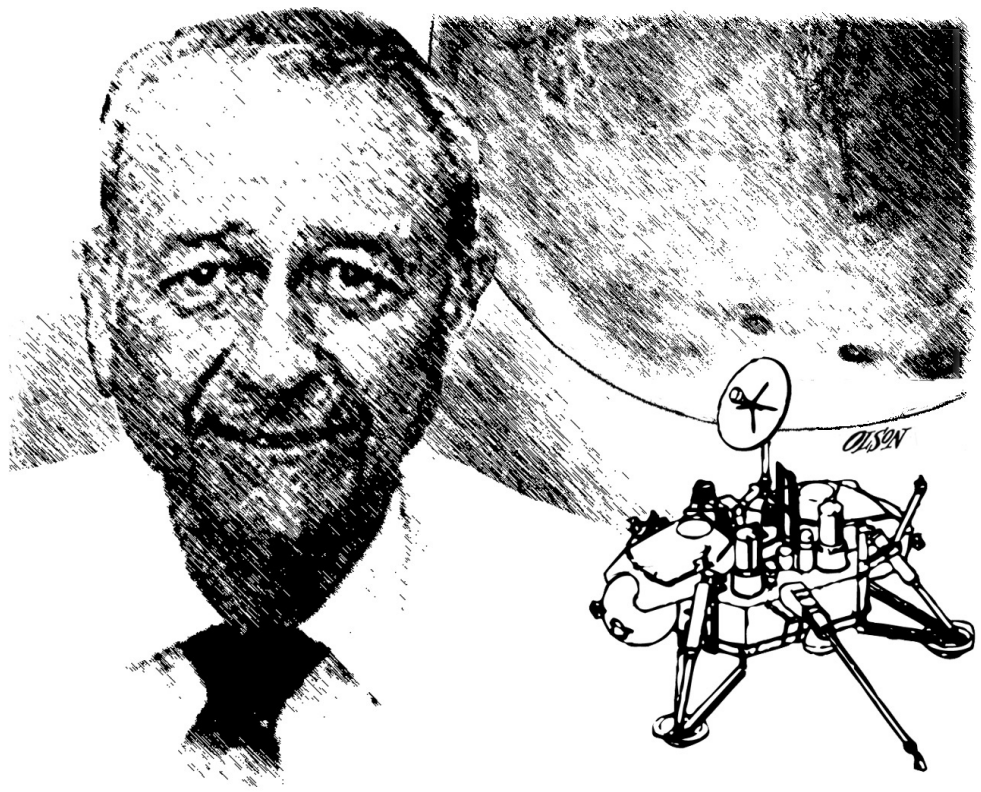
Life on Mars? It's a debate that has raged since the late 19th century, when Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli trained his telescope on the Red Planet and concluded that the *canali* he saw on its surface were the transport routes of an advanced race. A century later, space enthusiasts claimed to see the face of a helmeted humanoid in space probe images of Mars' Cydonia region. NASA refuted these claims, and, in response, released an image from its archives of a "happy face" on the Martian surface. There's also a space shot in the public domain of a Martian landform that resembles Kermit the Frog.

More recent and sharper images of the Cydonia region from the Mars Global Surveyor have revealed the much-ballyhooed structure to be an ordinary hill. From *canali*, to helmeted humanoids, to today's astrology charts, it seems the Red Planet has long functioned as a sort of interplanetary Rorschach blot, with observers tracing their fears and hopes in both its orb, and its orbit.

The Cydonia crowd was barking up the wrong terrain. The most compelling evidence of extraterrestrial life – microbial life, that is – may actually have already been found on Mars. On July 20, 1976, after a 10-month journey and a Gulliver-sized leap of 200 million miles from Earth, the first Viking Lander unfolded its spindly legs and touched down on the Martian surface. A burst of cheers erupted in the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, the Viking Mission's control centre. In a short time, the Viking camera began transmitting a panoramic view of the Martian landscape, and the room went wild. The Red Planet, revered by Babylonians as a "fire star," and associated with their most feared sky god, had shown its true face.

Six weeks later, Viking Lander 2 set down in a more northerly location. Each Lander contained equipment for the detection of Martian life forms. One experiment examined gas changes inside a small chamber, where a portion of Mars soil was exposed to water vapour and a cocktail of nutrients. Another experiment looked for the synthesis of organic substances in separate Martian soil samples. The third experiment, the "labeled release" experiment, supplied a diluted solution of five nutrients, tagged with radioactive carbon to Martian soil.

The labeled release experiment was the brainchild of Dr. Gilbert V. Levin, who first brought the possibility of testing for life on Mars to the attention of NASA officials back in 1959. Levin, a PhD in environmental engineering, and a former clinical assistant professor of preventive medicine at the Georgetown University school of medicine and dentistry, knew that his invention of microbial radiorespirometry could be adapted for interplanetary missions. In the early '60s, he went to work with Hazelton Laboratories Incorporated, where he tinkered with his "extraterrestrial life detection" experiment. He called his invention Gulliver, remembering how Swift's fictitious character travelled enormous distances and discovered tiny Lilliputian creatures.



Levin's fascination with Mars dated back to his childhood. As an adult, he would lead his children to the backyard telescope he had bought for them, so they could see Mars for themselves on warm summer nights. Once or twice, they even managed to spot Mars' bright polar ice caps and dark surface markings. His lifelong fascination with the fourth rock from the sun, and his later stumping for his life detection scheme, eventually paid off. His labeled release experiment, an outgrowth of Gulliver, was chosen as one of three other submissions for the life detection experiments on the Viking mission in the mid '70s. Levin gathered a team, which included Dr. Patricia Ann Straat, a young microbiologist from John Hopkins University. The two set to work trying to squeeze the LR equipment into a quarter of a cubic foot, the maximum amount of room available for Levin's experimental apparatus on each of the two Viking Landers.

Shortly after landing on Mars, Viking 1's surface sampler arm extended and scooped up a small quantity of material. Retracting into the Lander, the arm then apportioned the sample for testing in the three experiments. On the eighth day of the Viking mission, LR team leader Gilbert Levin got the chance of a lifetime, when his team injected its sample with radioactively tagged nutrients. According to Barry DiGregorio, author of *Mars: The Living Planet*, the radioactivity was measured every 16 minutes. "By early evening on July 30, it was obvious that a significantly positive reaction was occurring. It looked very similar to the response from Earth soils that contained microorganisms." It appeared that something was metabolizing the nutrients.

As the LR count rate continued, Levin assigned one of the team to go out and get a bottle of champagne. They had yet to perform a control experiment, but Levin was already confident that life had been discovered on another world.

Over a two-month period on the Viking Mission, Levin and Straat conducted nine experiments. For his control samples, Levin heated the samples to 160 degrees Celsius, to destroy any living material that might be responsible for the observed

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We are the land

FILMS WORTH WATCHING

by Robert Alstead

The Vancouver International Film Festival is in full flow until October 14. Of the selection of films I've seen, one theme that keeps cropping up is the land, and the way that our culture and identity feeds off it.

Homeland – Four Portraits of Native Action focuses on four Native Americans struggling to protect their homelands against government-sanctioned, environmental exploitation. The treatment of the subject is first class, combining high-end production values (it was shot on HD) with the intimacy of a "point of view" documentary style. In each of the four featurettes, Native activists talk about their attachment to the land and community, and the struggle to hold out against corporate plunderers. Landscapes are captured in evocative cinematography, and archive footage is well chosen. A northern Cheyenne negotiator explains how her people could be millionaires "overnight," by signing over resource rights to their lands. Instead, for the last 30 years, the impoverished community has chosen to fight big coal and methane gas interests, clamouring at the edge of their reservation. A young chief from the Gwich'in nation in Alaska, where the Porcupine caribou herd is threatened by drilling in the Alaskan wildlife reserve (a situation captured well in the gutsy Being Caribou) succinctly spells it out: "Their survival is our survival."

Oct. 5, 9:45 pm, VanCity Theatre; Oct. 6, 2:30 pm, VanCity Theatre; Oct. 9, 10 am, Pacific Cinematheque

Kekexili: Mountain Patrol, set on the rugged Tibetan plateau of Kekexili, combines breathtaking cinematography with a tense storyline about a group of volunteer game wardens vying with poachers to protect the chinu, a Tibetan antelope, from extinction. Based on a true story, the film has picked up awards wherever it goes. It's easy to see why.

Oct. 8, 1:30 pm, Visa Screening Room; Oct. 11, 9:30 pm, The Ridge.

Angry Monk profiles Gendun Cheophel, a rebellious Tibetan monk, and brilliant scholar, who, after 30 years in a monastery, decided he'd had enough of monastic life and wanted to experience the outside world. The documentary works as a historical travelogue of Tibet and India, covering the years leading up to Tibet's occupation, and challenging stereotypical notions about Tibet. Ultimately, it's a little anticlimactic, but writer-director Luc Schaedler offers the encouraging observation that Tibetans are both experiencing a renaissance, and a newfound confidence in their culture, in spite of the Chinese occupation, as the rediscovery of this worldly monk who, according to one of his friends, "smoked, drank, and screwed women," illustrates.

Werner Herzog's documentary Grizzly Man follows Timothy Treadwell who lived with bears until one ate him.

Oct. 4, 10 am, Pacific Cinematheque; Oct. 12, 7 pm, Ridge Theatre; Oct. 14, 1 pm, Granville 7.

In *Souvenir of Canada*, Vancouver's own Douglas Coupland provides a very personal, scrapbook-style, musing on national identity. In particular, the film focuses on Coupland's Canada House project, in which he turned a CMHA bungalow, built in the '50s in Vancouver, into an art installation populated with his Canadiana, before it was bulldozed. Watching the doc is an entertaining, albeit ephemeral experience, leaving one wishing that Coupland had probed deeper into the national psyche.

Oct. 2, 9:30 pm; Oct. 4, 12:30 pm; Oct. 11, 9:45 pm, all at Granville 7.

On the comedy side, the unusual Czech film *Skritek* is a modern burlesque, focusing on a dysfunctional nuclear family. The film pays tribute to the silent movie era (people grunt and make noises) and the motion is speeded up. At times hilarious, some scenes, such as the one set in a slaughterhouse, are deliberately disturbing.

Oct. 8, 10 pm, Granville 7; Oct. 13, 7:15 pm, Granville 7.

Why We Fight, Eugene Jarecki's celebrated documentary on the US "military-industrial complex," is quite different, and one of the festival's must-see films.

Oct. 2, 1 pm and Oct. 5, 9:30 pm, Granville 7.

"It had its moments" is a common euphemism heard at the fest for subpar films, and *A Bag of Rice* – a drawn-out, flat, and directionless DV drama – fits. When the bag of rice arrived an hour into the film, and sat against the wall, it was a moment. While *This Charming Girl* is better, it still tries one's patience. It's shot well, even stylishly, but the plaudit-winning portrait of the girl's troubled psychological state is laboured. When the undercurrent of tension bubbles to the surface in one excellent scene, unfortunately, it doesn't balance out the rest of the film's dreary pace.

Veteran documentarian Werner Herzog has always been magnetically drawn to danger, and those who court it. His latest, *Grizzly Man* (playing outside VIFF), is close to home. Herzog followed Timothy Treadwell, a self-styled animal rights activist and ursus lover, who lived with grizzlies in the Alaskan wilderness for 13 summers, even assigning them names, until he and his girlfriend were eaten by one of the bears. Making extensive use of Treadwell's own footage, the doc explores a number of important questions about man and his relationship with the wilderness.

More info on VIFF at www.viff.org. Robert Alstead writes for iofilm (www.iofilm.ca)

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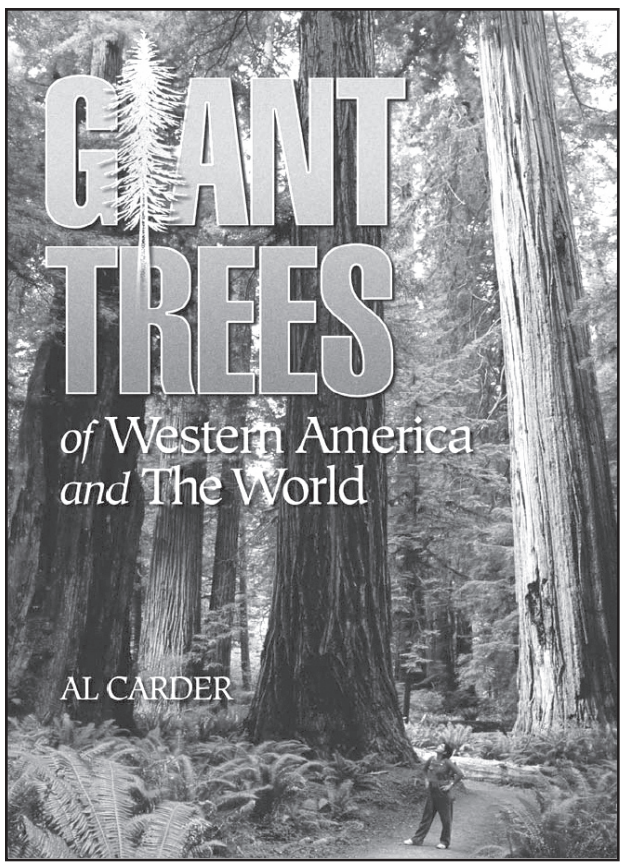

Earth's great-tree legacies

book review by Ralf Kelman

In many ways Dr. Al Carder is like some of the gnarly, ancient giants that he loves to visit and write about. Nearly a century old himself, this elfish, award-winning plant scientist, and international big-tree expert, can truly say he has been there. Having personally witnessed, in his youth, the height of the timber apocalypse in the Greater Vancouver area, years later, he decided to dedicate himself to learning more about the legendary giant trees – past and present.

Clearly not impressed with the historic greed of the world's lumber barons, who moved from one cellulose oilfield or "big-timber Saudi Arabia" to another, Carder repeatedly decries the tragic loss of many of the Earth's biggest and oldest living entities.

Giant Trees of Western America and the World is the author's second book on the subject, and it is jam-packed with fascinating stories and information. It is so dense in places that it could make a tree nerd cry; I recommend tackling one or two trees at a time. This riveting book talks of the spiritual, as well as the mysterious and the strange, and includes a number of tables listing the biggest, tallest, and oldest of the world's tree species.

Refreshingly, Carder included both imperial and metric measurements, since both can be relevant in appreciating tree size. His own illustrations, which depict stick people at the base of each tree, provide a much needed sense of scale so humans can grasp the staggering size of these natural wonders. Imagine being on the 30th floor of an apartment building with a 415-foot (126 m) Lynn Valley Douglas fir towering another 10 floors above you.

In the competitive Olympiad of forest giants, the author describes the evolution of these extreme plants from simple, prehistoric cell structures to the extraordinary genetic designs that resulted in the super trees known in recorded history.

In the competitive Olympiad of forest giants, the author describes the evolution of these extreme plants from simple, prehistoric cell structures to the extraordinary genetic designs that resulted in the super trees known in recorded history. Carder has tap-rooted an impressive network of big-tree experts, notably Robert Van Pelt, Arthur Lee Jacobson of Seattle, and Thomas Pakenham of Great Britain. Like Robert Van Pelt, he has travelled the world to personally experience the Earth's great tree legacies, and compare the giant trees he has visited on each continent with the finest examples of our Cascadian North American forest heritage.

Even the tree Ents of J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* love this book, with local Ents comparing themselves to their counterparts in Australia, New Zealand, Patagonia, and California. Join our big-tree friends and travel the forests of the world by way of this inTREEging and ENTertaining book.

Harbour Publishing Co. Ltd., 2005

Ralf Kelman is a well-known conceptual artist and lighting activist. He is on the BC government's Big Tree Registry Committee and is conducting a big-tree inventory for the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

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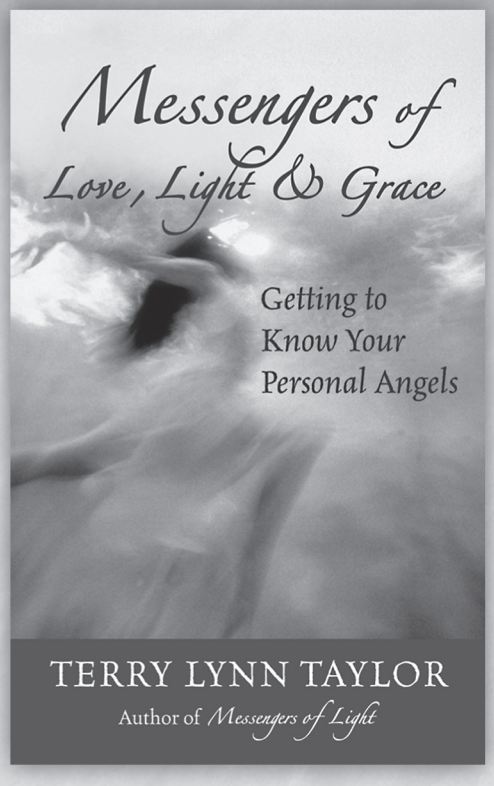

"The message sustains me on the road and at home. I love how Terry and the angels encourage us to stay in our hearts."

— CARLOS SANTANA, *musician*

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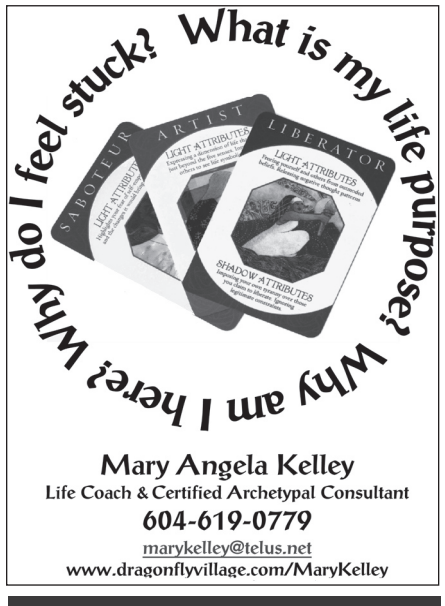

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What's happening to fuel prices?

EARTHFUTURE.COM *by Guy Dauncey*

If you drive a car, chances are you're wondering, "When will this stop?" At $40 a fill-up for a small car, or $80 for a family van or SUV, it's becoming an important question. If you heat your home with oil or gas, you face a much higher heating bill this winter.

Why is it happening? Are the oil companies gouging us? Is it a response to the war in Iraq, and hurricanes Katrina and Rita? Or is something else going on? The answer to all these questions is probably yes. Yes, the oil companies may be playing the price increases; that's what oil companies do. People hate to feel they're being ripped off, but there's little we can do, and they know it. If it's any comfort, in England people are paying almost $2.20 a litre.

Yes, political uncertainties in the Middle East may be contributing somewhat, and yes, caused a big spike in prices, and closed down one-quarter of all US oil production. These are temporary influences, however, which cannot explain the rise in the price of crude oil from $20 a barrel in 2002, to $30 in 2003, $40 in 2004, $50 in 2005, and currently between $60 and $70. At this rate, it will hit $100 a barrel by 2010, or sooner.

Monthly Outlook, published by the US Energy Information Agency, shows the price of oil, and also predicts its future. For the past three years, the publication has been consistently wrong. Every month, the price goes up. Every month, *Outlook* predicts that it will level off. And every month, the price keeps rising.

Why are the top US energy analysts so hopelessly wrong? Because every month they believe the increase has been caused by a temporary blip that will soon correct itself. The analysts are either unwilling, or unable, to tell us what may really be happening. The truth may be that we are approaching the halfway mark in the world's oil supply, after which production will start to decline.

The consensus seems to be that the Earth's legacy of accessible oil, laid down by ancient sea creatures and plants, millions of years ago, is around two trillion barrels, of which we have used one trillion; that is why we are close to the halfway mark. We are consuming 30.6 billion barrels a year (84 million barrels a day), a level of consumption that rises steadily as China and India climb on board.

As soon as we pass the halfway mark, we enter the last years of the Age of Oil. From that moment onwards, the price will rise every year until we reduce our global demand, by adopting more efficient, sustainable sources of energy, and leaving the oil behind us. This peak may have happened this summer.

Alberta's tar sands hold 300 billion barrels of unconventional oil, but the oil companies can only extract one million barrels a day, which is not enough to make a difference. The most they can hope to extract is four million barrels a day, by 2020. There is no reason to panic, however, or fear the end of civilization. We are a resourceful, energetic, innovative species, and this is simply a transition. It is no more the end of the world than was the change from horses to cars in the early 20th century.

The Dynasty electric car, made in Delta, BC since 1999, runs for as little as $7 a month. See www.itiselectric.com

The world has an ample supply of sustainable electricity from the sun, wind, tides, and other renewable sources. We don't need nuclear power or hot fusion. You can run a small, "smart," electric vehicle for as little as seven dollars a month, or $20 for a larger one. You can add batteries to a Prius to create a plug-in hybrid that can run around town on electric power, and use biodiesel or ethanol from agricultural wastes for longer journeys. We can build zero-energy homes and developments that use no fossil fuels, and make no contribution to global climate change. We can grow much more food locally, instead of shipping it vast distances across the world.

The biggest problem is not a lack of solutions. It is a lack of political will among our leaders, who seem to be as blind to what is about to happen as US leaders were to the impact of Katrina on New Orleans. The BC Sustainable Energy Association (www.bcsea.org) was created in 2004 to campaign for solutions in a positive, vigorous way, and so far, the response has been amazing. So don't waste time complaining about the price of gasoline. Get on board with the search for solutions, and celebrate the coming end of the Age of Oil.

Guy Dauncey is president of the BC Sustainable Energy Association (www.bcsea.org). He lives in Victoria.

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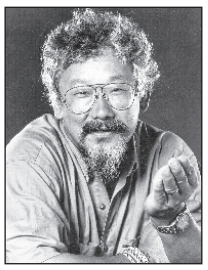


Expect more weather extremes

ENVIRONMENT

SCIENCE MATTERS *by David Suzuki*

After hurricanes Katrina and Rita plowed swathes through the southern US, most people were probably wondering how to help those in need, and were saddened by the destruction wrought. Some, however, were more concerned with getting another message out: "It has nothing to do with global warming!"

Within days of Katrina's strike, several Canadian newspapers published one writer's op-ed, describing how it has become "fashionable" for governments, environmental groups, and those in the media to blame extreme weather, like hurricanes, on climate change. The author went to great pains to insist that there is no connection between the two.

Strange. I can't recall a single headline that read: "Hurricanes hit US – global warming to blame." Nor can I recall any remarks made by any environmental groups attributing the disaster to global warming. Fact is, no editors wrote such headlines, and no scientists or representatives from environmental groups cited climate change as the cause. You can't attribute any singular weather event to climate change. It just doesn't work that way.

Certainly, some computer models suggest there will be an increase in hurricanes in the future due to climate change. In fact, many computer models anticipate an increase, in general, in extreme weather this century, though not necessarily hurricanes. But the jury's out on whether such increases are already occurring. Some studies conclude that they are, such as a paper published last year in *Geophysical Research Letters*. It ends with: "Thus our results suggest that predicted increases in Canadian forest fire occurrence due to anthropogenic climate change are already being observed." A recent paper in the *Journal of Climate* concludes: "In the mid-latitudes, there is a widespread increase in the frequency of very heavy precipitation during the past 50 to 100 years."

To demand absolute proof in science before acting on a threat is to ask the impossible. It's not just anti-scientific; it's anti-science.

But other studies are inconclusive. Indeed, finding out if extreme weather events are actually increasing around the world, in either severity or frequency, is difficult due to a lack of good-quality data from areas outside major population centres. So, why would the author send out this red herring addressing a non-issue? One possibility is that he may have other motives. He has been quoted in the press stating: "This [global warming] is the biggest scientific hoax being perpetrated on humanity. There is no global warming due to human anthropogenic activities."

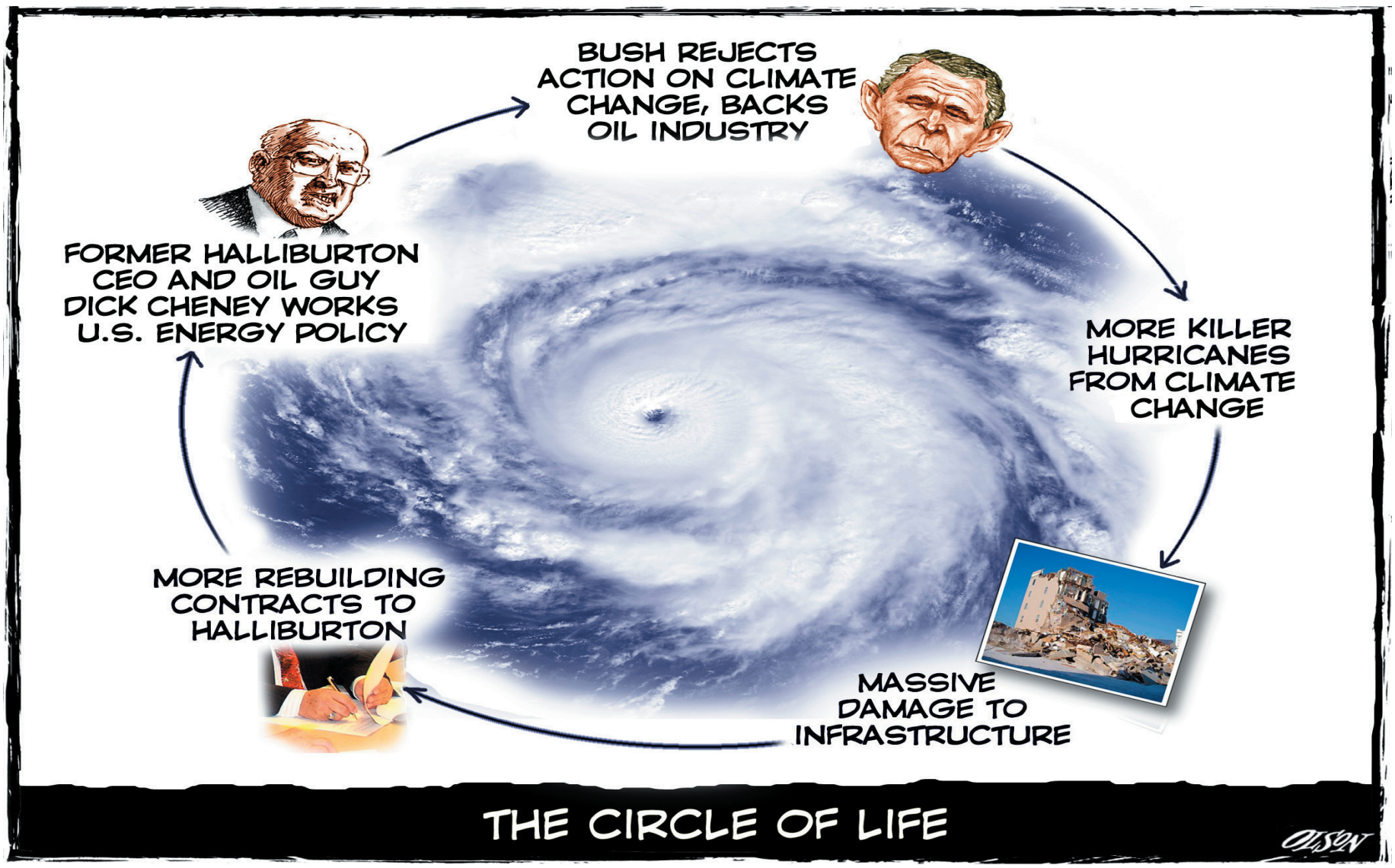
Ah, so there you have it. Katrina and Rita, it seems, were just a convenient excuse to get the same tired "Global warming isn't happening, and if it is, it has nothing to do with anything people are doing," message out to the masses. The charitable among us might call that opportunistic. The cynical would call it ambulance chasing.

The world's most prestigious scientific bodies – the US National Academy of Science, the Royal Society of the UK, the Royal Society of Canada, and others recently signed a declaration warning of "clear and increasing" climate change and urged our leaders to act. An analysis in *Science* of all 928 peer-reviewed climate studies published between 1993 and 2003 found that not a single one disagreed with the general scientific consensus on climate change.

To ignore such evidence and insist on "proof" flies in the face of the way science actually works. Science does not progress in a direct, linear path. There are no straight lines from discovery to discovery to enlightenment. When I tell university students today about some of the ideas we had about genetics when I was their age, they burst out laughing.

A recent analysis of scientific papers found that 50 percent of them are probably wrong. But that's not entirely unexpected. We learn from our failures as much as from our successes. That's the nature of the scientific process. To demand absolute proof in science before acting on a threat is to ask the impossible. It's not just anti-scientific; it's anti-science.

Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org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Grow the best garlic

ON THE GARDEN PATH

by Carolyn Herriot

On the Garden Path began a year ago with Greetings From the Garden Path, *a weekly email newsletter sent to customers of The Garden Path Organic Plant Nursery in Victoria. Each week Carolyn wrote about what she was doing in the garden, the orchard, the greenhouse, with seed saving and soil building, with the intention of helping gardeners of all levels realize they can have the most healthy, productive and beautiful garden without resorting to substances harmful to humans, animals, wildlife, plants, worms or the myriad of soil-dwelling organisms.*

For centuries, gardeners have revered garlic for its health-promoting properties and many culinary uses. In these times of increasing stress, adding garlic to one's diet boosts the immune system and helps combat infections and illness; garlic contains selenium, an essential trace element often lacking in our diets.

Most supermarket garlic has been fumigated with methyl bromide, an anti-sprouting chemical, so it is best to start with organic garlic bulbs from a reputable garlic grower. Make sure the garlic is free from white rot, a fungal disease that will wipe out your harvest for years to come. (See sidebar.)

Garlic falls into two distinctive sub-species: Hardneck, or Rocambole varieties (Allium ophioscorodon) produce a flower spike and have large, easy-peeling cloves, which will store from six to eight months. Rocambole garlics should be planted in October.

Softneck, or braiding, varieties (Allium sativum) have smaller cloves with no central stalk, as they do not produce flower spikes. They are generally spicier, with cloves that will store for a year. Softneck garlics can be planted in October, but some varieties, such as Silverskin, are best planted in spring.

Elephant garlic (Allium ampeloprasum) is actually a perennial leek, and has a much milder flavour. Its cloves split up when it is dried, so elephant garlic does not store for very long.

12 tips for top garlic

1. October planting is best for hardnecked and most soft-necked garlic varieties. Plant cloves about six weeks before the first hard frost, as they need a month of near-freezing temperatures, and at least 100 days to mature. Spring planted hardneck garlic does not grow into full-sized bulbs.

2. Choose a sunny site with rich, well-drained sandy loam – not too rich, or the tops will overdevelop. Garlic does not do well in light, sandy soils; heavy clay soils; or soils lacking in organic matter. If your soil is poor, amend it with compost and aged manure, and add wood ash to aid in bulb formation.

3. Replanting the largest cloves gives you the largest bulbs. To avoid problems with white rot, practise yearly crop rotation.

4. If garlic is planted too close together, or has to compete with weeds, it will result in smaller bulbs. Space cloves six inches apart in the row, and plant the rows a foot apart.

5. Plant individual cloves with the pointy end up, about two inches below the soil surface.

6. To cut down on weeding and watering, mulch with straw in spring, once the ground has warmed up. This will facilitate hand pulling later, rather than forking it out, which may injure the bulb.

7. Stop watering about three weeks before harvesting, to allow the bulbs to cure.

8. For hardneck garlic, cut off the flower spikes (scapes) when they appear. The energy used to go to seed detracts from the bulb size.

9. Harvest garlic bulbs in July, when about two-thirds of the leaves have turned yellow. Don't wait until all the leaves have yellowed, as the cloves separate in an over-mature bulb, and will not store well.

10. Dry the bulbs outdoors in the sun for two or three days, unless it is really hot, which may cause them to brown, or threatening to rain, which would cause them to rot.

11. Remove surface soil from bulbs, but preserve the protective skin layers. Hang to dry in a warm, dark, airy place in bunches of six to seven bulbs. Garlic requires four to six weeks to cure properly.

12. Storing garlic in a cool, dark place with ventilation provides the longest storage life.

From A Year on the Garden Path, A 52-Week Organic Gardening Guide *by Carolyn Herriot. $29.95. Earthfuture Publications, Victoria, BC. Available at Banyen Books and Duthie Books or www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath*

Watch for white rot

White rot is an aggressive fungus, which first hit California in 1939. It spreads rapidly through root systems, and is deadly to garlic. It can survive in soil for 30 years, and, once established, is almost impossible to eradicate. Harvesting equipment, cloves, and running water all spread fruiting bodies (sclerotia).
Sclerotia wake up in cold weather, activated by gases released by garlic roots. It only takes one sclerotium per 10 kilograms of soil to set off the white rot disease. One per quart of soil is enough to kill half the plants in a field. Make sure any garlic you purchase is free from this deadly disease.

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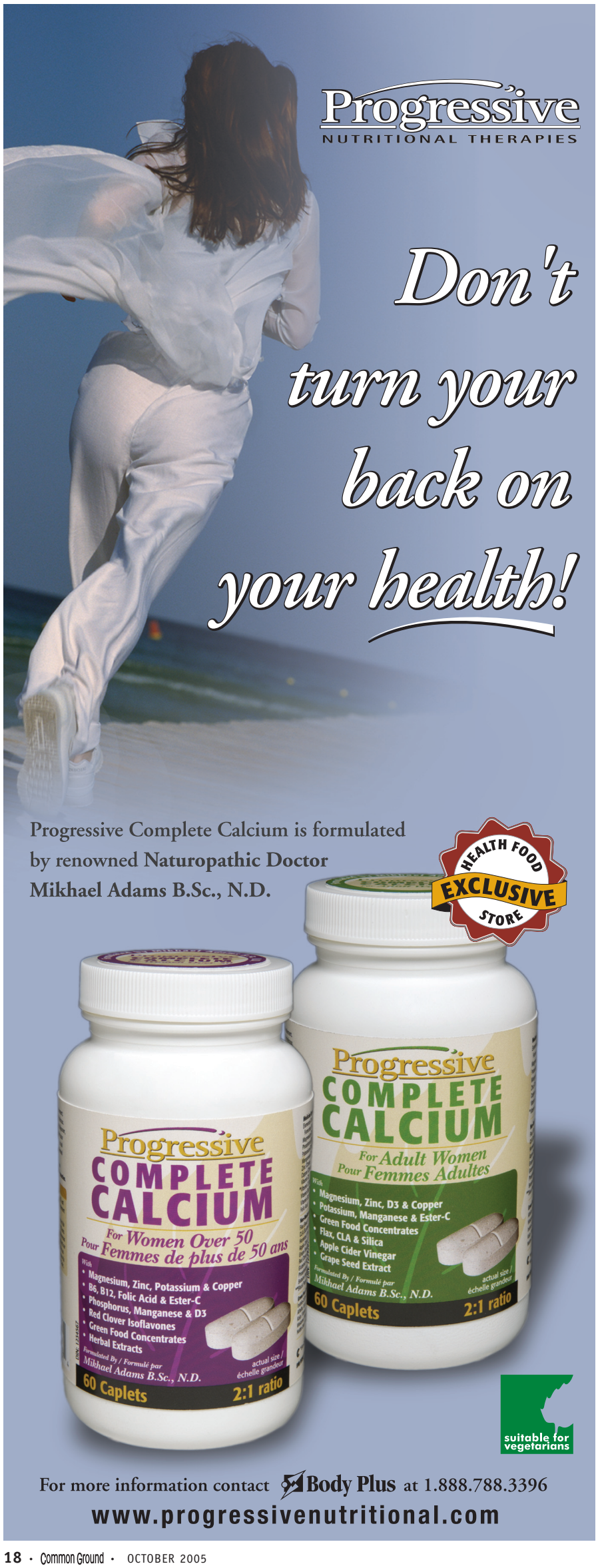
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Respect your body

SIMPLY WOMAN!

by Crystal Andrus

You might believe that atrophy, deterioration, sickness, and senility are all an inevitable part of aging. That is what we have seen, and therefore it must be true. Yet, scientists have proven that eating well and exercising into our 70s, and beyond, can arrest, and even reverse, the signs of aging. In their book *Biomarkers*, authors William Evans and Brian Rosenberg, researchers at Tufts University, have outlined nine markers for age that are now considered reversible: high blood pressure, blood-sugar tolerance, cholesterol/HDL ratio, bone density, aerobic capacity, body fat, lean muscle mass, metabolic rate, and strength. Reversible – meaning we can undo the damage we've done.

What you do to and with your physical body, and what you believe about yourself and your future, are the keys to rebuilding a stronger, healthier you. Your thoughts, or intentions, have the most powerful influence on your health. You become what you believe. Before you can manifest positive changes in every cell of your body, you must believe that a new you – a healthier, more positive you – is your reality. You must erase any negative messages, and re-record positive ones that will carry you toward your wildest dreams.

Your thoughts, or intentions, have the most powerful influence on your health. You become what you believe.

Nutrition

Build a new reality and dramatically change the very essence of your current cells, or your body as you know it, by eating protein with every meal. Choose primarily fish, egg whites, non-fat (or one percent) cottage cheese, and protein shakes. Also eat fresh, fibrous vegetables with each meal. Cut back on starchy carbohydrates, and stick with high-fibre carbohydrates, such as salads. Continue to drink distilled water and take your vitamins. Essential fatty acids, apple cider vinegar, acidophilus, and fibre (if you are easily constipated) are also very important.

Stand tall

Posture is an important aspect of your health. If you sit at a desk all day in the wrong position, or if the chair itself is poorly designed, you can develop backaches, headaches, and even digestive problems. After a short period of time, your chest muscles shorten and tighten, and your posture is dominated by a rounded back and jutting head. As muscle imbalances become fixed, you soon lose all sense of correct, postural alignment.

Stand in front of the mirror sideways, and critique your posture. Do your shoulders fall forward? Do you have a sunken chest? Does your tummy round out your middle? Now pull your shoulders back and tuck in your tummy. Imagine a string attached to your head pulling you up as tall as possible. Align your cheekbones over your collarbones, and your ears with your shoulders. Focus on lining your hips up directly under your shoulders. Now how do you look? Not just 10 pounds smaller, but also 100 percent better. If you quickly fall back into your slouching ways, try some posture-building exercises to retrain your muscles.

Intensify your interval training

Warm up with three to five minutes of regular walking. Pick up the pace to a jog, or a brisk walking speed that is comfortable for you. Jog or walk at this pace for five minutes. Take it back down to a walk for two minutes. For the next 12 minutes, do three four-minute speed intervals. The first minute should be a light jog. The second minute should be faster and intense. The third minute should be all out, as fast you can go. For the last minute, drop back to a walk to catch your breath. Repeat this three times.

If you have a treadmill, switch to incline intervals. Continue to walk, but increase the incline to the same number in height as your original walking speed. For example, if you walk at a speed of 3.5, raise your incline to 3.5 for one minute. The next minute, incline the treadmill one level higher. Do this two more times, progressively increasing the incline height by one level each minute. However, do not increase your speed during incline intervals. Drop back down to a regular flat walk, catch your breath, and let the burning dissipate from your legs. Repeat this incline interval once more. For the next 10 minutes, jog or walk at a comfortable, steady pace. Always cool down with stretching.

Keep up with your core body strength conditioning and stretching. Ideally, work your muscles two to three times every week.

Crystal Andrus's column is a condensed version of her book on personal transformation. She is an authority on women's health, a sought-after speaker, and author of the bestseller Simply Woman! The 12 Week Body/Mind/Soul Total Transformation Program. *www.hayhouse.com/details.php?id=2247.*

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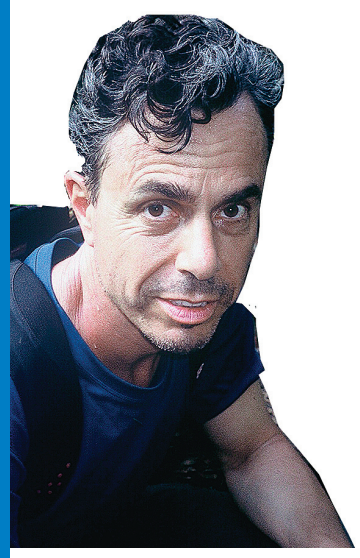

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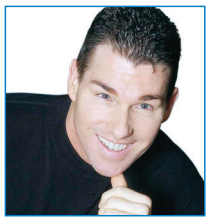

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Letters

Doctors in the dark

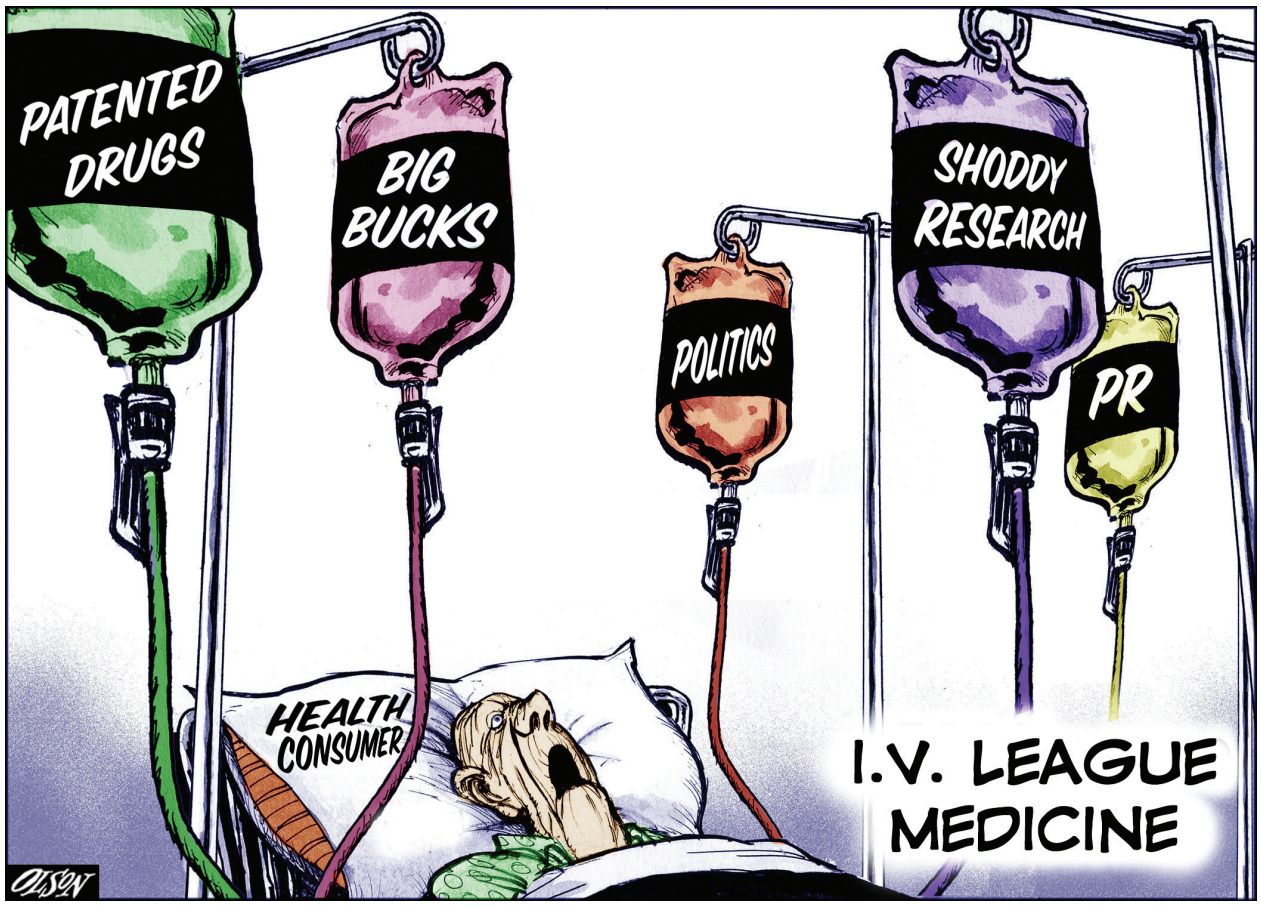
Thank you for publishing *Donuts for Doctors* by Alan Cassels (September 2005). As a family physician in the states, I, and other primary-care physicians, have had to practise with psychiatric consultants advising us, and who, because of the pharmaceutical industry's influence at the university level, are basically without any up-to-date knowledge of the various medical disorders that can present as depression. Therefore, we were incorrectly taught how to work up patients with the symptoms that would typically be identified as depression. The literature that was produced for us to study, typically funded by the pharmaceutical industry with the blessing of the licensing boards, did not cover new developments from the '80s and '90s, in the differential diagnosis of illnesses presenting with the symptom complex that is generically called "depression." Many cases of sleep deprivation were, and continue to be, misdiagnosed, and people are inappropriately given antidepressants and antipsychotics.

Physicians, who complain about this inappropriate influence, and/or actually make a concerted effort to find other disorders masquerading as "depression," can be harassed by licensing boards. This, in fact, happened to me when a forensic psychiatrist on the Texas State Board of Medical Examiners presided over a session where I was considered incompetent because I was diagnosing more than 10 percent of my patients with obstructive sleep apnea. The forensic expert noted that she didn't really know anything about obstructive sleep apnea.

Last October, *Chest*, an internationally respected medical journal, published a study demonstrating that about 35 percent of the patients in a US primary care practice had obstructive sleep apnea, typically undiagnosed. Unfortunately, persons with mild, or severe sleep apnea, have a significantly increased risk for motor vehicular accidents, heart attacks, strokes, and behavioural issues resulting in psychiatric diagnoses; criminal charges may result 10 percent of the time. There has not been any research into sleep disorders presenting as a preventable cause of crime. I believe this is another result of the pharmaceutical industry's financial power over medical education and research.

This issue applies to Canada in that physicians are being pressured to follow clinical guidelines. Who writes the clinical guidelines? In the states, 90 percent of the physicians participating in writing these guidelines have pharmaceutical industry conflicts of interest. Maybe it is time to pressure the government to fully fund physician education with tax revenues, instead of allowing pharmaceutical money to be strewn about. That may be the most important way to reduce the high cost of medical care. Most physicians would gladly give competent scientific and cost effective care – if they only knew what that was.

Cynthia Jeanne Lee, MD



Cure worse than cancer

Thank you so much for your article *Donuts for Doctors*. In my opinion, it is not that more people are depressed, but more that life is hard, and for many, getting harder. It is natural to be depressed sometimes, and there are many ways to protect yourself from letting those moments control your life. I have seen many people, including professionals, suffer greatly from bad reactions to many different drugs, Paxil among them. My late father became almost unrecognizable as he was dying from a brain tumour, the last cancer after endless rounds of chemo, radiation, and surgery for colon cancer. By the time he died, he had colon, lung, eye, and brain cancer. I believe the steroid drugs increased his personality changes as much as the tumour itself.

Were he alive, Terry Fox would be horrified at the lack of meaningful progress in cancer care. Millions spent on not much that is of any use to the average patient, as far as I can see. I have seen many people drugged incapable and stupefied, and our system has taken to forcing drugs on anyone labelled with certain illnesses. It is unbelievable. As well as the profit-making pharmaceutical industry's lack of any credibility, we see people forced to take bad drugs to keep their drivers' licences, or even their freedom. Shame on them.

C.P. Drew

Cooperation our only alternative

What a great pleasure to read some of my own long-held ideas articulated so masterfully in Geoff Olson's recent article *Kropotkin vs. Darwin* (September 2005). This happens almost every time I read Olson's work. I have long been disturbed by the pervasive emphasis on violence as the basic driving force in nature from the Darwinist camp, and the blatant dearth of examples in the media of the more prevalent components of cooperation and collaboration in the natural world.

How interesting to read about Kropotkin, who had the independence of mind to go against the grain and emphasize the myriad examples of cooperation that abound in the natural world, and to point out how the ideas of his British colleagues in 1902 found their way into the literature of the age, justifying capitalists' selfish ends. Geoff Olson is so right to bring this man's ideas to light at this particular time in history, and to point out that cooperation is perhaps our only alternative to "mutual extermination."

Bravo, once again, Geoff! You have a way of always hitting the nail on the head. Cheers and thanks.

Cath Morris

An open letter to US President Bush

In case you missed last Friday's *Late Night With Bill Maher*:

Mr. President, this job can't be fun for you any more.

There's no more money to spend – you used up all of that.

You can't start another war because you used up the army.

And now, darn the luck, the rest of your term has become the Bush family nightmare: helping poor people.

Listen to your mom. The cupboard's bare, the credit cards maxed out.

No one's speaking to you. Mission accomplished.

Now it's time to do what you've always done best: lose interest and walk away.

Like you did with your military service and the oil company and the baseball team. It's time. Time to move on and try the next fantasy job.

How about cowboy or space man?

Now I know what you're saying: there are so many other things that you as president could involve yourself in. Please don't. I know, I know.

There's a lot left to do.

There's a war with Venezuela.

Eliminating the sales tax on yachts.

Turning the space program over to the church.

And social security to Fannie Mae. Giving embryos the vote.

But, Sir, none of that is going to happen now. Why?

Because you govern like Billy Joel drives.

You've performed so poorly.

I'm surprised that you haven't given yourself a medal.

You're a catastrophe that walks like a man.

Herbert Hoover was a shitty president, but even he never conceded an entire city to rising water and snakes.

On your watch, we've lost almost all of our allies, the surplus, four airliners, two trade centers, a piece of the Pentagon and the city of New Orleans.

Maybe you're just not lucky.

I'm not saying you don't love this country.

I'm just wondering how much worse it could be if you were on the other side.

So, yes, God does speak to you.

What he is saying is: "Take a hint."

Move forward and look back

Many thanks to Celia Brauer for her well-researched and compelling argument for the return of salmon-bearing streams to Vancouver (*Where Have All the Salmon Gone?* September 2005). As more and more evidence shows, we must work to bring our city, and planet, back to nature. Sometimes, to progress, we must back up. Thank you.

Spencer Herbert, COPE candidate for parks board commissioner

Trade pacts cost a bundle

FTA AND NAFTA *by David Orchard*

Across Canada, the price of gasoline rose steadily over the summer. Recently, it shot up another 30 percent. We were told that this unprecedented leap was because hurricane Katrina in the Gulf of Mexico affected US production.

Why does a storm in the US drive up Canadian prices? There was no storm in Alberta. No drilling rigs were toppled in Saskatchewan. Yet Canadians are now paying up to $1.44 a litre, or over $6 per gallon for gasoline, more than most places in the US. How can this be? Isn't Canada a producer of oil and gas, the largest foreign source for the US, in fact?

The answer is spelled FTA and NAFTA. Not long ago, we had a made-in-Canada price for energy, Canadian oil and gas companies, and a 25-year reserve of gas set aside for Canada's future needs. A cold country, with vast distances, quite reasonably gave its own citizens a better price for oil and gas than it charged for export – just as Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, and other oil exporting countries do for their citizens.

In an era of world competition, abundant energy was Canada's advantage. China has cheap labour, the US a warmer climate, and Canada had energy. That all changed in 1988 when Canada, for reasons unknown to most of its citizens, signed the Canada-US free trade agreement (FTA), and with the stroke of a pen gave away control of its energy.

The energy terms of the FTA bear repeating. Canada abolished its reserve requirements for its own future needs – so all of our reserves can now be exported – and agreed to never charge the US more for energy than it charged Canadians. In addition, if Canada faced a shortage of any form of energy, it would continue to send the same proportion of its energy to the US, even if Canadians went short. It is safe to say that no other country in the world has, in peacetime, so completely signed away its energy resources, present and future.

In 1994, the FTA was expanded to NAFTA to include Mexico. Mexico refused to sign the energy clauses Canada had signed. Those of us who spoke out against the FTA pointed out this was not free trade, but forced trade, and warned that the agreement would have profound effects on our future, our energy security, and our sovereignty.

We were accused of being "fear mongers," "anti-trade," and "protectionist." Now, even those who hurled those accusations realize they have been standing on quicksand. The results stare Canadians in the face, and impact their wallets every time they fill their cars, trucks, and industrial or agricultural machines with fuel.

As Canada exports more and more oil and gas – it has bypassed Saudi Arabia as the largest supplier to the US – some still attempt to justify these agreements. However, under the FTA, the US, now taking 60 percent plus of our production, will, when the shortage comes, have the right to 60 percent (or more!) in perpetuity. Canadians will have the right to whatever remains.

Oh, but the Alberta tar sands are there, we are assured. Rarely mentioned is that the petroleum coming out of the tar sands goes south to the US, virtually royalty free, and that large reserves of increasingly valuable natural gas are burned to process this tar sands production. In other words, Canada is actually subsidizing – at great financial and environmental cost – the giveaway of a precious, finite resource.

The NAFTA promise of secure access to the US market was never anything but an illusion, and nothing but shreds remain of the guarantee of an end to arbitrary US tariffs. Yet the takeover of our industries continues apace, from energy to beef, from manufacturing to retail. It's time to wake up.

We need to establish a coast-to-coast, comprehensive, review of the FTA and NAFTA. This review should examine, in detail, the effects of these agreements on our economy and sovereignty, and make an informed future recommendation.

Integrating our energy and our economy into the US means being subject to US ownership. It means losing the capacity to direct our future and our own resources in our national interest. We don't have to remain tied to agreements that will see our energy prices driven through the roof, or watch our economy and control of our destiny move into foreign hands.

Some insist that Canada continue to suffer and crawl, but it is not necessary. Both the FTA and NAFTA have withdrawal clauses that enable Canada, with six months notice, to withdraw without penalty or conditions and then revert back to trading with the US under existing multilateral trade rules.

Let's not wait until our industries and agriculture become completely non-competitive, or until Canadians are begging for their own energy at 40 degrees below zero. As we watch the catastrophic events unfold in the Gulf of Mexico, it is clear that Canada also has important decisions to make to safeguard its future.

David Orchard is author of The Fight for Canada - Four Centuries of Resistance to American Expansionism, *and ran for the leadership of the federal Progressive Conservative Party in 1998 and 2003. He farms at Borden, Saskatchewan, and can be reached at 306-652-7095, or via davidorchard@sasktel.net*

Terasen sale treason?

Open letter to all BC residents

The sale of BC Gas to Terasen Gas and now to Kinder Morgan of the USA is a matter of great concern to me and I am sure to all British Columbians. Here are a few points we must consider before this important business transaction is approved by all levels of government and all commissions.

1. According to my knowledge, the BC Utilities Commission is a regulatory body ensuring the supply of utilities to BC residents at cost and reasonable profit. What is the definition of cost? And what amount or percent is reasonable profit? Let us say cost is all costs of a company, which includes office overheads etc. It means we, the BC residents, will be responsible for Kinder Morgan's US head office costs.

2. A province or country should never sell its essential services or resources without which residents cannot live, in this case the sale of Terasen Gas, a BC company, to an American company. What does it mean to our future generations? They will not have the right of access to natural gas in their own homeland and we will be dependent on the mercy of Kinder Morgan to supply BC residents with natural gas. One can argue that if Terasen does not supply us with gas we can survive on electricity, but is this what BC residents want? If yes who gets to decide? BC residents, a few commissioners or Premier Gorden Campbell? If we continue to allow takeovers of resources and services, we remain economic slaves.

3. Premier Campbell and all concerned – Haven't we learned a lesson after losing $5 billion on softwood lumber? How may more billions of dollars do we have to lose before we will wake up?

I understand that Premier Campbell has an MBA; it does not make any sense to me to sell our natural resources to a private company and then buy them back at higher rates? What part of his education taught him that this is sound economics? Government has to buy this resource for its infrastructure use. Is it any wonder Mexico refused to sign the energy sharing part of NAFTA that Canada signed. Under NAFTA we can never reduce the amount of oil and gas we ship to the US.

Let us hand this project over to a sitting MBA class at UBC or SFU or any university in Canada and have students analyze if the sale of Terasen to Kinder Morgan is a good business transaction for the long run. Remember natural gas prices in BC have gone up by almost 25 percent just since January. What do we want to leave behind for our children and grandchildren? The decision to act is yours, act now. Write letters and emails to your MLAs and MPs to stop this now before it is too late.

Rajesh Chawla

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Fragments

TWENTY SOMETHING

by Ishi Dinim

On a precipice, howling winds of change swirl around us, so strong that sheet metal siding is ripped off buildings. Pressures are being heaped upon the planet and we are feeling it spread throughout each system. There is a coming apart. A global caffeinated adrenal panic attack, surging to a crash, all symptoms of an accelerated out of control society. Pandemic exhaustion: to the point of needing to talk oneself through the most simplistic routines. Am I crazy if I talk to myself? I keep wanting to be like I was, but I'm not him anymore. There is a thick film around me, almost a bubble, a sense of profound disconnection. I live in a separate reality from what I would consider "normal life"; my existence has become that of a full-time fantasy maker. I'm in the guts, making the machine go. How can I tell if I've sold out or not? As my rational mind slips into dense fatigue, my compass seems distorted. I give it a shake. Where am I going to again? And why?

Maybe I can conjure up some cliché saying like "No great purpose is achieved without sacrifice," to give me motivation to stay this course. Who made that up? Did I? Is it even true? I'm taking their resources to build my own something, right? The dark fear in my gut is that I will not commit to making it happen. Will I ever live my dreams? Is it even what I want now, now that my dreams have become replays of my daily repetitions? So this is what they mean when they say, "Oh yeah, living the dream."

I often feel like I'm hitting a breaking point in my life. Then, I reflect on external events to give me a contrast or reference point to compare with. The stresses in my world are miniscule when standing beside the tragedies of others. Yet, I'm so wrapped up in my own story that there isn't a moment to really attempt to fix things for anyone else. Maybe on some level, even though we are smugly self-sufficient and secure with our place in the world, we acknowledge in a deepest place that we are not. There is a fear that it will happen to us. I can't go trade my fresh tomatoes for your beans because I'm living an existence separate from actually sustaining my day-to-day needs. I rely on someone else somewhere else to make sure I can go to the store to survive. What if it all falls apart? I could trade you a camera for a laptop or something like that but no one can eat DVDs.

The stresses in my world are miniscule when standing beside the tragedies of others.

I spend all my time working, making films and television shows, so that I can hibernate and watch a film or show on my weekend that somebody else made. This has become survival. Dependence; trust that somehow there will be food at the grocery store and a new show to watch. I hope they'll watch mine.

Hope is all that remains. It will all work out. Someone out there in the world will want to keep sending food for me, right?

"Always remember you're unique.
Just like everyone else." – Anon

"A human being is a part of the whole, called by us, "Universe," a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest – a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. Nobody is able to achieve this completely, but the striving for such achievement is in itself a part of the liberation and a foundation for inner security." – Albert Einstein

Ishi graduated from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in 2001, with a BFA major in photography. He makes films, collects cacti, and ponders many things. Currently he is trying to figure out what to do with the rest his life. contactishi@yahoo.ca waiting to hear echoes back.

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continued from page 11

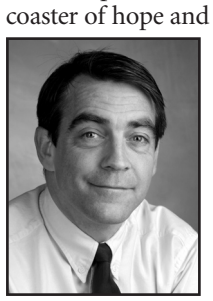
phase – the emergence of the inevitable safety warnings that remind people that the new treatment could harm patients. In fact, after a summer of hype, the USFDA issued a warning on August 31, which advised of "potential heart problems associated with use of the breast cancer drug Herceptin." That's a cute way to describe congestive heart failure and cardiac death that occurred in 4.1 percent of the patients taking the treatment, versus 0.8 percent of those in the trials who were denied Herceptin.

What were the benefits of the drug, again? A reduction of 52 percent in the recurrence of tumours, right? What that means is that 15 percent of women on Herceptin undergoing chemo had a recurrence of breast cancer within four years of diagnosis, compared to 33 percent of women who had chemo alone. That is an absolute risk reduction of 18 percent (33 minus 15 = 18). But it is presented as a 52 percent reduction because 15 is 52 percent less than 33. Get it? This is only "tumour recurrence," something you'd obviously want to avoid, but it is survival that ultimately counts. How did Herceptin fare? In this case, the difference in the death rate between the women who got Herceptin versus those who didn't was between two to four percent, depending on how long they took it.

So for every 100 women getting Herceptin, between two and four more will survive, but three more women will also develop congestive heart failure while on this treatment, which is also potentially fatal. Hmm, still a wonder drug? Should we be paying $40,000 a year to maybe help one in a 100 women who have this type of breast cancer? And then the inevitable question: "Well, what if it was your sister?"

Me? Well, I'd hope and pray. I would hope that she'd demand the evidence of the drug's effectiveness and safety before leaping into the fray. And I would pray she'd be the one in a 100 who benefited. This is a standard miracle story. I've seen dozens of them. Take a moment this month to consider raising your awareness of breast cancer, and think why it may be wholly appropriate to hold off ever believing breathless reports of the benefits of a new treatment.

We all want new and better breast cancer treatments, but that doesn't mean we should allow selective and misleading reports of a drug's benefits to drain our public health care system of precious dollars, and put suffering patients on a roller coaster of hope and despair.



Alan Cassels is the co-author of Selling Sickness: How the World's Largest Pharmaceutical Companies Are Turning Us All Into Patients.

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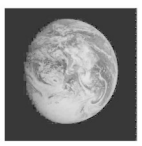

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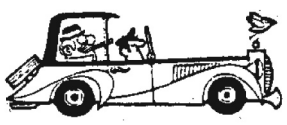

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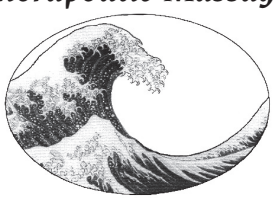

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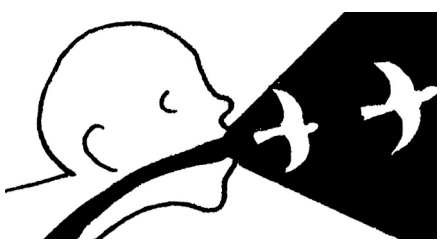

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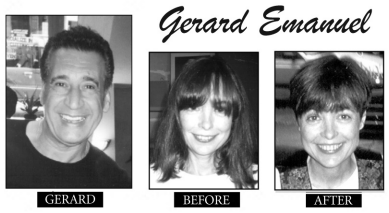

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FREE YOURSELF
Jaminie Hilton
RCC
Masters in Counselling, Chemical Dependency Certificate

Discover your personal strength - it lies in the coping style that has gotten you this far; **shift** depression to hope. **Free** yourself from fears of unfamiliar feelings that block growth toward creativity and intimacy. **Deepen** and **enrich** your connection with others. **Create the life you deserve.**

In a safe environment, learn to value your power, and your vulnerability; change learned patterns; allow wishes, hopes, and dreams to surface.
CALL ME FOR INFO ON EMDR
• Creative/Career Blocks • Addictive Behaviours
• Trauma/Abuse: Physical, Sexual, Emotional
• Depression • Anxiety • Grief/Loss
• Relationship (from romantic to roommates)
I have 20+ years experience as a therapist with adults, adolescents, and couples. Clinical Supervision Available.
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www.jaminiehilton-counselling.ca

ARE YOU READY FOR A CHANGE?
Lorraine Milardo Bennington
M.Ed. (Counselling)
Reg. Psychologist #815

You can overcome your limiting beliefs and open up to your joy!
Success Coaching
Hypnotherapy - Weight Loss/Stop Smoking, Athletic performance, Blocks to Success/Fear of failure, Past life regression, Ancestral healing, Anxiety, Phobias

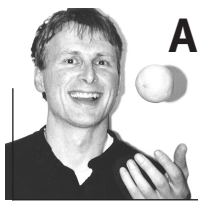
Couples Counselling
Archetypal Astrology
Lorraine Milardo Bennington, success coach, psychologist and hypnotherapist, has been practising hypnosis for over 30 years and skillfully integrates hypnotherapy and shamanic training into her coaching and counselling practice. Lorraine gently guides people in the process of transformation, connecting to their higher self and reclaiming joy and personal power. Lorraine has returned to Vancouver after 10 years living on Kauai and Maui. **(604)871-4342** or **transformance@mac.com**

Therapy of the Whole Person
John Arnold Ph.D.
Therapist / Counselor since 1975
604.261.2788

Only by Working with the Whole Person Can You Achieve Truly Permanent and Effective Change.

If problems and issues keep popping up in your life and you are STILL STUCK, it is because you have not gotten to the root causes. Completion of any problem comes only when you have resolved your issues physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually and the underlying reasons for repetitive patterns of behavior are uncovered and resolved. If you are fed up and want to do something radical about your predicament, give me a call **604-261-2788 or visit my web page at www.members.shaw.ca/johnarnoldphd/**

PSYCHOLOGY, THERAPY AND COUNSELLING



Are U on purpose?

www.mtkhealing.com

"All of your symptoms - depressions, fears, cancers, relationship patterns, bankruptcies and divorces - point to the deeper purpose of your life."

Michael Talbot-Kelly, MH, MA
Holistic Psychotherapy
Registered Clinical Counselor

Learning to befriend these symptoms helps you discover the wholeness that is you. This friendship is what heals and restores the natural rhythms in your life.

Michael is a holistic psychotherapist who has 25 years experience healing the mind, body and soul. Michael's commitment is to guide you - gently and truthfully - toward restoring these natural rhythms that allow you to live your full and balanced life.

Call Michael: 604-317-1613

What Is Possible?

Toni Pieroni, M.A.
Registered Clinical Counsellor

Freedom from the beliefs, feelings and behaviours that result in emotional pain and repetitive, reactive patterns that keep you stuck. Life's options open up as you learn to respond rather than react, resulting in:
• Healthy, intimate, satisfying relationships
• More success in work and career
• Joy, ease and pleasure in life itself
• Aliveness and authenticity

Some issues dealt with:
• Emotional, physical and sexual abuse
• Addictive and obsessional behaviour
• Relationship issues and co-dependency
• Anxiety and depression • Self-expression

About Toni Pieroni: Along with my professional training and skill, I bring over 20 years of personal development experience. I offer individual and couple therapy. For further information or for a free introductory session, phone **604-737-0168**. Or visit our web address: **www.counsellingbc.com/listings/tpieroni.htm**

TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE!

Nicklas Ehrlich
B.A., B.S.W., M.S.W., R.C.C.
25 + years experience
FREE initial consultation
604-990-1584

"Nicklas's knowledge and approach to how we can free ourselves from the limiting programs from the past is liberating and incredibly empowering for the average individual." **Grace Cirocco: International Speaker and Best Selling Author of *"Take the Step, the Bridge Will Be There"***

Read the rest of this testimonial and others on the CD program that re-programs the past without going over the past. Create a bright, healthy present and future: www.selfempowermenteveryday.com
Read more testimonials on counseling/coaching to remove blockages for all ages: Relationship, sexual, communication, emotional/mental, family, creative, health, career, social, and so much more:
www.ehrlichandassociates.com
FREE talks at: Indigo Books in N. Vancouver, Whole Foods W. Vancouver & other locations. Some coverage avail./ask about discounted rates (Some weekend & evening appointments available)

Bianca Rucker & Associates Inc.

Bianca Rucker
R.N., M.A., Ph.D.

Sexual & Relationship Therapy

Problems with sexual functioning, inhibitions, desire discrepancies, affairs, or communication conflicts? We provide sex therapy, marriage counselling, clinical hypnosis. Extended health coverage. #400 - 601 West Broadway Vancouver. **Bianca Rucker, PhD 604-731-4466** ***www.biancarucker.com***

Transform Curses Into Blessings

Barbara Madani
Registered Psychologist #335

Vancouver 604 876-4313
www.powerpsych.com

If you want to **recover** the real self, **reconnect** with your energy and creativity, **refine** skills to **realize** your goals and **reinstate** your personal power - **request** an appointment. We will transform curses into blessings using: • EMDR • Power Therapies
• exploration of feelings and reframing beliefs
• goal setting and decision making

CORE BELIEF ENGINEERING

Reach and expand your potential in all areas of your life. Since 1985 this gentle method has proven exceptionally effective in changing automatic, self-limiting patterns and enhancing Conscious Choice. Elly Roselle offers private sessions and classes.
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Wilms Counselling Services

Change is possible

At Wilms Counselling services, we recognize long-term problems require long-term solutions. We provide in-depth therapy for people dealing with a range of issues. Change is difficult, but infinitely rewarding. If you have considered making change then call **604-733-9588.**

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Past-Life Therapy

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Di Cherry is a Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist.
Member Canadian Hypnotherapy Assn.
www.dicherry.com
2678 W 11th Ave, Vancouver.
For information or appointments:
604-731-2646 or dicherry@telus.net

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Psychologist/Coach, Best-selling Author/ Syndicated Columnist helps individuals and organizations **dare to change**. Contact QUESTERS if you're: questing for meaningful work/life, needing new direction in life, wanting to advance your career, or attain desired goals. 604.723.3415; questers@daretochange.com
www.daretochange.com

RELATIONSHIP ISSUES • SHYNESS • DEPRESSION • ANXIETY • ANGER • Post Traumatic Stress Disorder • Abuse • Sexual Addiction • Effective treatment using counselling, hypnotherapy and EMDR. Reasonable rates. Louise Evans, BA., MEd., Marriage and Family Therapist. Metrotown and W. Broadway office.
604-522-0257 www.louiserevans.com

RESTAURANTS

Stormin' Norman's Spirit Grill

Organic, Exotic Gourmet Wild Meat Burgers. Stormin' Norman's legendary burgers made with love since 1991 on Wreck Beach. Fully licensed with live music Thursday through Sunday. Our 25 types of self-serve condiments complement the best and biggest variety of meats in the world. Burgers currently available: buffalo, ostrich, venison, wild boar, elk, muskox, caribou, mixed wild meat, ground sirloin, organic beef, NY steak, ribeye, lamb, rabbit, alligator, wild salmon, halibut, chicken breast and veggie. We feature whole wheat bakery buns, home-cut fries, poutine, veggie gravy; numerous exotic sausages: pheasant and pistachio, duck and apple, venison orange and fennel, wild boar and apricot, buffalo smokies and veggie dogs. **Stormin' Norman's Spirit Grill Is a Slow Food Gourmet Restaurant. Ask about wholesale wild meat. Private parties hosted.**

1438 Commercial Drive, Vancouver
604-251-4644
www.stormin-norman.ca

Nooru Mahal Restaurant

Serving Vancouver since 1985

Best dosa in town. Specializes in South Indian and Sri Lankan cuisine and the dosa listings alone are mind-boggling. Everything from lamb to chicken to beef to hot and spicy fish or plenty of vegetarian options. Open 7 days a week. **Special thali for lunch.**
4354 Fraser St., Van **604-873-9263**

FORAGE & FEAST WITH THE BISHOP
October 4–5

Join organic farmer Gary King and restaurateur John Bishop for an agri-culinary tour at the Fall Feast in Cawston, BC. Arrive early on the 4th & help John Bishop forage for food. Sumptuous meal served in Jenny's Garlic Shed, 6pm. $225/per person includes B&B. Travel planning available. Call Gary, 604-538-3018. Email farmergaryeh@netscape.net wwwbishopsandkings.com

EAST IS EAST

EXPERIENCE THE EAST WITH YOUR TASTE BUDS

3243 West Broadway 604-734-5881

Chai Tea House Now Open Upstairs

"East Is East is a place where you are encouraged to talk to your neighbours. This is definitely not the Ritz, but it certainly is Kits. From plumbers to publishers, hippies to generation whatever, this place has special appeal."
Owen Williams, Common Ground

Nirvana
The Ultimate in Indian Cuisine

Savour an Indian culinary experience while enveloped in the mysterious ragas of classical Indian music. Winner of West Ender's Silver Medal for **Best Indian Restaurant 2004-2005**. Delicious selection of vegetarian and vegan specialties. Open 7 days a week for lunch & dinner. 2313 Main St., Vancouver **604.872.8779 www.nirvanarestaurant.ca**

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

SANT RAJINDER SINGH

SCIENCE OF SPIRITUALITY

Science of Spirituality is a global, not-for-profit spiritual organization under the leadership of Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj.
A world-renowned spiritual Master, who teaches a simple yet dynamic meditation technique for all. See www.sos.org for more information about this spiritual path. All SOS programs are FREE.
New Sunday venue - 9100 Van Horne Way, Richmond (corner of Great Canadian Way & Van Horne - East entrance) Every Sunday: 10AM Meditation, 11AM Spiritual Discourse.
Contact: Judy 604-530-0589.

Please join us, same location, Sunday, October 23rd @ 11:00 am for a special introductory talk by Arran Stephens, founder of Nature's Path Foods, on "The Role of Meditation in Spirituality, Ecology and Sustainability".
Light vegetarian refreshments to follow, 12:15.

Sahaja Yoga Meditation

As taught by
H. H. Shri Mataji
Nirmala Devi
www.sahajayoga.ca

"Sahaja Yoga is different from other Yogas because it begins with SELF REALIZATION**.** It is important for everyone to have that knowledge of the roots within ourselves. Sahaja Yoga allows the individual to become his own Spiritual Guide."

– H. H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

"I have been practising SY for over 13 years and this became a way of life for me. Being a physician I had been absorbing Sahaj knowledge slowly but surely since all my questions, doubts amd dilemmas were answered.
My life became rich of people, love and optimism. My personality shifted from being shy, uncertain and fearful to optimistic, open and balanced. The biggest gift I ever received was self-realization and a chance to become a yogi-connected with my Own Spirit."
– Dr. I. Fadyeyeva, Business Development Manager, GN, Hearing Care

FREE meditation classes. 604-597-8440, 604-715-8888, 604-726-8149 & 604-980-8107.
www.sahajayoga.org 604-597-8440

INTERNATIONAL SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE
1A - 320 Columbia Street, New Westminster
604-521-6336
www.isacanada.ca
e-mail: theisacanada@yahoo.ca

WEDNESDAY EVENTS 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm • **HEALING** 7 pm
SUNDAY SERVICES 11:00 am – See *DATEBOOK: Sundays*

Oct. 5 - Mediumship - Yvonne Colasanti
Oct. 12 - Open Circle - Anne Beveridge
Oct. 19 - Mediumship - Janis Soparlo & Joyce Tarvin
Oct. 26 - Your Vibration Affects Us - Deborah White
Members $7 • Non-members $8

MINI-READINGS - Saturday, October 22
10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. ~ Please book by 2:30
$20 for first 15 minute reading, $17 for second
$35 for a half hour with the same reader

ART OF LIVING
www.artofliving.org

Make life a celebration. The Art of Living courses improve health and give greater happiness by eliminating stress through a powerful breathing technique that purifies and rejuvenates the mind and body. Teacher trained by His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.
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VEGETARIAN RESTAURANTS

Vegetarian Restaurant
菩提 菜香素食
3932 Fraser & 23rd Ave.
Vancouver
(604) 873-3848
Bodhi Choi Heung

Serving traditional **Buddhist style** vegetarian food since 1960. Come sample over 200 vegetarian dishes. Operated by **Chef Ho** formerly of **Bodai**. Open 6 days a week from 11:00 am to 9:30 pm, closed Tuesday. Rated Best Vegetarian Restaurant in Vancouver Magazine's 9th Annual Restaurant Awards. Call for reservations. **604-873-3848**

NAAM
"Great Food, Anytime!"
Open **24 Hours**

The Naam Vegetarian Restaurant
For years voted "Best Vegetarian" in the Georgia Straight and in Vancouver Magazine's "Readers' Choice". Open seven days a week, 24 hours, licensed, wood fireplace, heated patio, live music at dinner. 2724 West 4th Ave. **604-738-7151.**

妙香齋
The Rainbow Vegetarian Restaurant
273-7311
8095 Park Road, Richmond, BC
11:00 am - 9:30 pm
Closed Tuesdays, except full moon day

The Meaning of Vegetarian
It comes from the Latin word "VEGETUS." It means "Integrity, Healthy, Freshness, Energetic." Remember it and enjoy the flavour! Try our delicious appetizers, soups, thick soups, deluxe veggie dishes, hot pots, noodles, congee, deep fried & sauteed dishes, and rice dishes.

Greens and Gourmet®
2582 West Broadway
Vancouver 604-737-7373
Mon-Thurs 11am-9:30pm
Fri-Sun 11am-10pm

Vancouver's largest vegetarian buffet
Enjoy homemade vegetarian food at its finest from our extensive hot and cold buffets. There is something to please everyone from our international selection of tasty dishes, many vegan, wheat and gluten free, including our natural desserts. Eat in or take out.

We are located in historic Hammond featuring various quality crusty breads and organic hearty loaves.
Soup, sandwiches, muffins, and more. More choices and ordering on-line.
Best Bread Co. (604)465-4065 20635 Maple Cres. @207th Maple Ridge **www.bestbread.ca**
Next vegan potluck October 23!

The problem with the world is that the fanatics are always so certain of themselves, while wise people are so full of doubts.
– Bertrand Russell

TIME OUT & RENTALS

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SEMINAR ROOM IN THE WORLD

Available for meditation, yoga, retreats workshops, lectures, and seminars.
Available days, evenings, and weekends.
Seats up to 50 people. Comfortable chairs.

Full spectrum - balanced natural light.
Sound system, piano and stage. Full kitchen facilities. Fully carpeted ... nicely decorated.
Colours chosen by a colour therapist.
Very quiet and peaceful environment.

Beautiful park with trees 1/2 block away.
Grass side yard with patio and flowers.
Free parking. Centrally located.
23rd and Oak Area, Vancouver.
Call to view 604-264-0714.

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BC's best kept secret! 12 unique B&B rooms await you in our historic inn overlooking the Thompson River. Internationally inspired vegetarian cuisine. On Highway 8 - 3.5 hours north of Vancouver.
www.spencesbridge.ca 1-877-354-1997

Central Seminar Room / Office. Cozy, carpeted room, seats 40. Available 24 hours, seven days/week. Natural/dimmer lighting, parking, beverage facilities, good energies. 535 West 10th Avenue (at Cambie) (604) 875-8818.

Confronted with the impossibility of remaining faithful to one's beliefs, and the equal impossibility of becoming free of them, one can be driven to the most inhuman excesses.
– James Baldwin

DATEBOOK

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Crazed cabaret, Mexican style: direct from Mexico City, cross-cultural Frida/Elvis of the performance art world, Astrid Hadad y Los Tarzanes, deconstructs cultural icons and sacred cows, October 22, 8 pm, Chan Centre at UBC. Tickets $45/$35/$25 at Ticketmaster.ca or 604-280-3311. www.mundomundo.com

OCT 4-5
Agri-culinary experience in Cawston, BC with John Bishop & Gary King. See Resource Directory ad on page 28.

OCT 6
Dr. Leonard Horowitz – The Spiritual Power of Divine Wisdom. Centennial Theatre, N Van, 7–10 pm, 604-984-4484.

OCT 8
Open House - Rosen Method Bodywork and Movement, "The Wisdom of the Body," 10:30 am-3:00 pm. $5. Movement Class: 11:00 am. Talk/Demo1:00 pm. Sessions/reduced fee at 3:00 pm. 535 W. 10th Ave. 604-736-0406, 1-877-855-0179. www.rosenmethod-canada.com

SpiritSong 'Fall to Joy' Thanksgiving Concert - Leora Cashe Music Director. 7:30pm, Unitarian Church (49/Oak). Tickets $20/$15, KidsFree, Zulu Records. Info: 604-321-1225. www.cslvancouver.com

OCT 9
Psychic Fair - 1-4:00 pm. Sample our aura healings and mini-readings. Receive information about your relationships, finances, spiritual purpose and more!! Meditation and Healing classes also. CDM Psychic Institute, 1114 W. Broadway, Ste. 202, Vancouver. 604-730-8788.

OCT 9 - 14
Spirit, Science and Evolution: The Great Unfolding www.earthfuture.com/syntropy/ A 5-day intensive workshop with Guy Dauncey at Hollyhock, Cortes Island. www.hollyhock.ca 1-800-933-6339.

OCT 11-12
Discover the magic of Colour, Crystals & Alchemy with this hands-on workshop by world-renowned alchemist Anthony Cooper. Call 604-687-3757.

OCT 12 & 25, NOV 2 & 9
Wednesday evening **Yoga & Gita Workshop**,www.druyoga.com, www.drubhagavadgita.com. 6-7:30pm, Dru Yoga - Stability Flow Vitality Heart Power $18/drop in, $58/series. 8-9:30pm, Dru Bhagavad Gita Chanting Satsang Meditation $20/drop-in, $65/series. The Peace Centre, 604-876-5153.

OCT 14
Poems of Resistance and Conscience, 2:45-4-15pm, Vancouver Community College, downtown campus. Host Ameena Mayer. Free. www.andreathompson.ca/at.html

OCT 15
Improv Storytelling with Kevin Mackenzie - www.skwriter.com/storyteller.html 2:30-5:30pm, $35. 3214 W. 10th. Info: allicebtelling@yahoo.com 604 947-2482.

OCT 15-23
Rosen Method Bodywork Intensive workshop with teachers Bill Samsel & Mariette Berinstein. Demonstrations, movement, hands-on experience, witnessing, discussion & sharing, $850, 535 West 10th Ave. Van. 1-877-885-0179. www.rosenmethod-canada.com

OCT 16
DRU Yoga Workshop Port Coquitlam – Move with ease – flow with life. 1:30-5pm, Samadhi Yoga Centre $45/prepaid. $50/door. 604-936-3255. www.druyoga.com

OCT 21
Introduction to Trager®, its amazing gentle touch, movements, de-stressing effects beyond relaxation. With Louise Morin, Certified Practitioner. Participation. Draw. Tea. Blue Lotus Centre, 2414 Main St. 7-9 pm. $10. 604.688-5838. www.trager.com

OCT 21-23
Free the **Heart intensive** with David Jones @ Victoria Centre for Self Awareness. 1-800-209-1992 / 250-544-0005 in Victoria.

OCT 21-23
Homeopathic Master Clinician Course - Come study with Louis Klein R.S. Hom. A three-year, part-time program for intermediate to advanced practitioners of all backgrounds. First session October 21-23,2005. Held at the Y-Hotel in Downtown Vancouver. Beginners can start with the Online Foundation Course. For more information: www.homeopathycourses.com or call Aryana @604-947-0757.

OCT 22
Astrid Hadad y Los Tarzanes Direct from Mexico City - cabaret diva-comedienne Astrid Hadad, known for her ravishing voice, outrageous stage presence, and stunningly surreal costumes. 8pm, Chan Centre at UBC, $45/$35/$25 Ticketmaster.ca or 604-280-3311, www.mundomundo.com

OCT 22-23
Intuitive Living & Being - Intuition never lets you down; it is the Divine Power's way of speaking to you. Learn how to access and develop it. SRMH Centre, Sunshine Coast, 1-604-740-0898.

OCT 23
DRU Yoga Workshop White Rock – The dance between stillness & dynamism, 1:30-5pm, Kent Street. $45/prepaid, $50/door. 604-936-3255. www.druyoga.com

OCT 25
Silva Method Free Introductory Presentation. 7pm, UBC Library at Robson Square & 3-Day Basic Seminar, Oct 29,30 and Nov 5th. 604-925-0816._ info@silvamethod-canada.com

OCT 26 – NOV 6
2nd Annual DTES **Heart of the City Festival** - Various venues and locations throughout the DTES and District. Info: 778-855-4099, www.heartofthecityfestival.com

OCT 27
Sandra Maitri speaking on her new book on the Enneagram. Vancouver Public Library. 7.30pm. Free.

OCT 29-30
Vancouver Health Show – Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre. Tickets: $8/day incl. all seminars & exhibits, $7/seniors. Call 1-800-471-1112. Show hrs – Sat: 10am-6pm. Sun: 11am-5pm. www.HealthShows.com. Email healthshows@shaw.ca

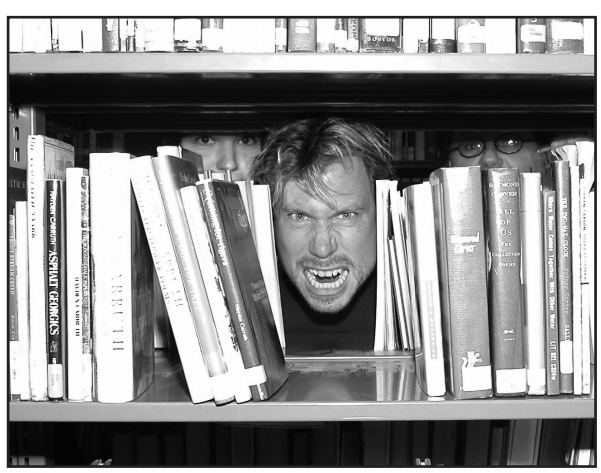
OCT 29-30
Sandra Maitri Enneagram Workshop - Spiritual Dimensions of the Enneagram. Plaza500 hotel. 10-5pm. judithbradley@shaw.ca 604-291-9033.

OCT 30
Wiccan Samhain Ritual & Spiral Dance - Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph St. Doors open 6:15pm. Ritual starts 7:00pm. Tickets $10-$20. Info: 604-837-6389.

NOV 5
DRU Yoga Workshop Vancouver – Dynamic DRU Flow. 1:30-5pm, The Peace Centre. $45/prepaid, $50/door. 604-876-5153. www.druyoga.com

NOV 9
Introduction to Active Meditation - 7-9pm, Burnaby $10. Stress release, physical fitness, relaxation, meditation. Pearl 604-945-0830. www.pkwellness.com

NOV 11-13
TRAGER®: Neuropeptides - Our Emotional Soup with Deane Juhan. Potent molecules of information borne by all our bodies' fluids, effecting all body functions and behaviour. For bodyworkers & body-centred psychotherapists. 22 credits CMTBC. Before Oct.10: $475.00 ($525.00) In Victoria, BC. Vancouver contact: Louise Morin, CTP. 604.688-5838, morintrager@yahoo.ca



The 2nd annual Canadian Festival of Spoken Word, Oct 11-15
Poets Martin van Steinburg (centre), Emily Campbell (left) and artistic director RC (Randy Jacobs) Weslowski want poetry to leap off the shelf during the second annual Canadian Festival of Spoken Word. See www.cfsw.net, email srduncan@shaw.ca or call 604-788-8340. Photo: Peter Valentine

NOV 12
Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble - Legendary composer, singer, director/choreographer, Meredith & her vocal ensemble explore music for voice as a multi-faceted instrument, 8pm, Chan Centre at UBC, $45/$40/$35, Ticketmaster.ca or 604-280-3311. www.mundomundo.com

NOV 20
Animal Communication Workshop - 8-5pm, Vancouver $125. Learn to communicate with animals telepathically. Understand them beyond physical illusion. Pearl 604-945-0830. www.sacredbond.ca

NOV 23-27
Two Spirits: an Erotic Retreat for Women and Men at Body Electric School. Expand your erotic education & learn the ancient connection between sex and spirit. For more info and to register, call Emaya: 877 247 9504. www.bodyelectric.org

DEC 2-4
Learning to recite Rig Veda: unfolding the powerful sound value of a sacred language with Michel Angot, Sanskrit scholar, Rosemary Heights, Surrey. 1-800-849-9955 or info@quatuor.cc. www.michelangot.com

DEC 5-9
The **Yoga-Sutra of Patanujali**: a validation of the personal mystical experience with Michel Angot, Sanskrit scholar, Rosemary Heights, Surrey. 1-800-849-9955 or info@quatuor.cc. www.michelangot.com

SUNDAYS

The Centre for Spiritual Living Inspired by the teachings of Deepak Chopra and Louise Hay? You'll love our Sunday services, 11:00am. Children welcome. 1495 W. 8th Ave, Vancouver, 604-321-1225 www.cslvancouver.com

International Spiritualist Alliance #1A -320 Columbia Street, New West (Downstairs) 604-521-6336 . Sunday Services 11am . Rev. Joyce Tarvin 604-433-6663 See resource directory. www.isacanada.ca

TUESDAYS

Reflexology Student Clinic sessions - only $15. Evenings only. By appointment. Pacific Institute of Reflexology. 604.875.8818

Pranic Healing Clinic Non-touch energy healing. By donation. Tuesdays 11:00am - 3:00pm. 2950 Laurel St, Vancouver. Closed last Tuesday of month. 604-988-1102. www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver

WEDNESDAYS

Hawaiian Healing Night 7pm. Hawaiian guided Meditation, Sharing the Aloha,and snacks after, meet like-minded people and share. $5.00 donation. At Hale Ola - a place of Healing 1215 Madison ave. Burnaby 604-431-7474 Kaimana and Moanikeala

Chai Gallery at East is East hosts a fundraiser for Children of War (www.thechildrenofwar.org) featuring local musicians & traditional dancers. Wednesday evenings, 7:30 pm-1:30 am, 3243 W. Broadway. Tickets at the door or call 778-837-1862. By donation.

Meditation & Self-inquiry: Have you lost the balance and rhythm in your life? Let stillness (through self-inquiry) return your wholeness. 5-7 pm. 317-1613.

THURSDAYS

Pranic Healing Clinics - Non-touch energy healing. By donation. Thursdays 10:00am - 2:00pm, and 6:00pm - 9:00pm. 204 –133 E 14th, North Vancouver. Closed last Thursday of month. 604-988-1102 www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver

What Is It Like To Be Awakened? - Nov 10-Dec 15, 7:30pm. Teachings with Bonni Ross on the Seven Factors of Enlightenment. Contact John Wellwood, Tel: 604-681-8343 john.wellwood@telus.net

New! **Natural Spiritual Healing** - Natural, effective treatment for stress, illness, menopause, disease, pain, recovery, relationship difficulties and bereavement. W. 19th Ave. @ Dunbar. Professional Healer from SRMH Centre worldwide. Call 1-604-740-0898.

ONGOING

A Course in Miracles drop-in study group, 7:30 pm, 517 E 17th St. North Van. Suggested drop in donation. Tuesdays & Sundays Call Susan 604 987-6985.

Meditation: The Yoga of the Soul - Free instruction in the meditation of Inner Light and Sound. Simple and effective. 604-304-8862 or e-mail becomeasoul@yahoo.com Info: www.knowthyselfassoul.net

Free Meditation workshop: Experience kundalini awakening through Sahaja Yoga, as taught by Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi.& enjoy your Powers at our Weekly classes, always free and open to all. 604 597-8440 www.sahajayoga.org

List at: www.commonground.ca > Advertising > Datebook > Deadline Oct 15 for Nov issue

CLASSIFIEDS

List at: www.commonground.ca > Advertising > Classifieds

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Massage Studio for Sale $25,000. Turnkey, Fully Equipped. Very attractive Lease. Exquisite Décor. Sechelt, BC. Kashaelle: 604-885-0176, www.ankate.ca ankatespainc@dccnet.com

EDUCATION

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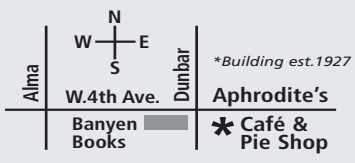

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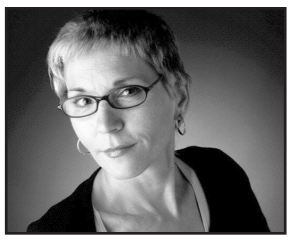

On Track Zodiac

October 2005 by Ilona Hedi Granik

ARIES (March 21 – April 19)
You may be experiencing a strong sense of isolation, but try not to let your loneliness get the best of you. You may not like so much solitude, but ride it out until the transit passes. You can gain much clarity and wisdom. Stay centred in your heart.

TAURUS (April 20 – May 21)
If you can let go of the past, you will never be the same. Bring some magic into your daily life. Become self-sufficient. Learn that your mistakes were blessings in disguise. Go with the flow, and with what you know.

GEMINI (May 22 – June 20)
Your sense of perspective could be slightly off-kilter. Try to stay calm, and alter your perceptions to fit the changing times. Discussions about your emotions may not go well. You will gain greater understanding by giving yourself a lot of space.

CANCER (June 21 – July 22)
Compulsions and addictions may have a hold on you. Your emotions are just beneath the surface. You could act your way out of struggles, or take off the mask and giggle into the next moment. Try to maintain conscious control of your emotions. Why is Buddha laughing?

LEO (July 23 – Aug. 22)
Don't look now, but your romantic side is showing. You may have some divine encounters with your fantasies. Your imagination could run wild; the lighter side of your nature will enjoy the ride. The fiery part of your personality takes full reign. Two romantic souls touch each other.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 – Sept. 22)
Could be that disappointments along the way have made you wiser. You decided not to become bitter and sharpened your goals instead. Your quick wit will help you attain what you need. Freedom demands awareness. Use the eye of the tiger.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 – Oct. 22)
Divert any negativity you may experience with your strength and know-how. When life throws you a curve, your natural, peace-loving nature can let it go. The times ahead may be challenging, but try not to shy away from being direct.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 – Nov. 21)
Mars is moving counter to its usual direction, and you simply can't compete. Angry outbursts may not be the answer. If you find yourself easily agitated, you'll just have to stomp your feet instead. Try to resolve issues with diplomacy.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 – Dec. 21)
If you find that your needs are not being met, take a break. Sell what you don't need. Perhaps you are on the move again. You are a warrior of change, not someone who dwells on conflict. If you need to cut ties, do it. Spread your wings and rediscover who you are.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 – Jan. 19)
It is time to clean up what you might have swept under the rug. Put your nose to the grindstone and get in the game. Even if the tasks seem daunting, all you accomplish will exhilarate you. Remember that sense of completion.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 – Feb. 19)
Have you allowed your presumptions to squelch your exuberance? It's a good time to clearly identify your wishes and write them down. If you can't decide on a plan, do nothing. Just don't give in to feelings of inadequacy. Communications with others have a new emotional depth.

PISCES (Feb. 20 – March 20)
What you thought were good choices could now be turning to dust. Try to resist the path of negative self-talk. Make rituals of simplicity part of your everyday reality. You have the power.

Ilona Hedi Granik is a clairvoyant consultant and author with 31 years experience in astrology, multi-media art, and healing. ilona23@shaw.ca

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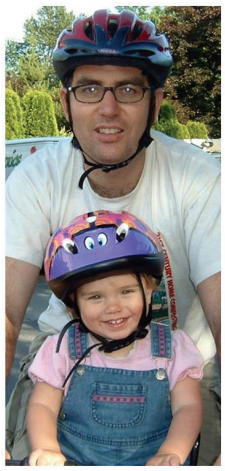

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continued from page 7

depression. Blushing, laughing, and crying are all physical reactions caused by mental or emotional states.

A recent study at the Mayo Clinic proved that type II (adult onset) diabetics were 66 percent more apt to develop all types of dementia, and had more than twice the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. Diabetics were 300 percent more apt to develop dementia and Alzheimer's in a recent large-scale study at the University of California at Davis. However, the early stages of dementia in diabetics are preventable or reversible if diabetics follow the regimen recommended in this book. The main message is compromising your physical health over long periods of time is outright dangerous for your body and can be detrimental to optimal brain function for a lifetime.

Mountains of stunning evidence have piled up in the last few years documenting the mind-body connection as real, eminent, and powerful. Neuroscientists have mapped pathways linking mental states to physical ones and vice versa. Our modern-day "survival of the wisest" challenge is to learn how to navigate them wisely, at will. Dr. Kenneth Pelletier, clinical professor of medicine at the University of Arizona and the University of Maryland medical schools, states, "We want to know why so many people still aren't using mind-body medicine, when research has shown it to be strikingly effective for an enormous number of conditions."

Eat in tune with your genetic code

Genetically we have evolved, but so have the ever-available processed, synthetic, refined foods. Can they fuel our magnificent 100 trillion cells? Today, genetics and lifestyle are colliding. To have your radiant vitality and brainpower operating at optimum, it is critical to fuel yourself with a diet true to your ancient genetic origin and makeup. You can reset your genetic code, lose weight permanently, achieve peak performance, and enhance mental sharpness.

The landscape of your brain and body, the actual architecture and intricate wiring, was formed by the seasonal foods available at the time. Roughly 99.9 percent of your genetic structure was formed even before the advent of agriculture 10,000 or so years ago. The miraculous engineering, hardwiring, and perfect performance of the body and mind were based on a genetic makeup that allowed our early ancestors to function as nature designed. Our ancestors grew and developed their digestion, absorption, distribution, and elimination processes based on cell-friendly foods that were compatible, body ready, and readily abundant, thousands of years before the advent of fast-food chains, junk food, and late-night corner stores.

Remarkably, most people today fuel themselves with processed, convenience foods, sweet-tasting foods, and chemically-altered foods that are attractively and colourfully packaged. This "foodstuff" we now ingest has the unprecedented, stunning ability to be only one molecule away from being plastic. New miracle-age, fast-food chains are booming with catchy advertising promises in a land where dairy is queen and burger is king.

So, while our genetic makeup (genome) and origin have changed only 0.01 percent in the last 10,000 years, our lifestyle has changed 99 percent. Our hunter-gatherer ancestors were aerobically fit. They were virtually free of the chronic "lifestyle diseases" that cause 85 percent of all illness in North America today.

An awesome biological jolt

Our shift from hunting and gathering to agriculture, and from the industrial revolution to industry, has drastically changed human nutrition with an extremely detrimental biological jolt, which in turn has promoted heart disease, cancer, stroke, depression, diabetes, and a prevailing sense of drop-dead fatigue. There is now a worrisome decrease in our consumption of lean, high-quality protein; very low-density complex carbohydrates, such as vegetables, greens, salads, spices and herbs; and moderate-density complex carbohydrates, such as fruits, berries and minimally processed grains. These cell-friendly foods contain a small amount of naturally occurring sugar for a steady energy supply and a lot of life-supportive fibre, water, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and phytonutrients.

Your body and brain are organic structures. One hundred percent of the foods you feed your cells determine their architectural structure, their optimum energy output potential, their ability to function, and your daily rejuvenation potential. Your body's hardwired network communication systems are based on the available enzymes found in vegetables, wild greens, nuts, seeds, roots, herbs, spices, fruits, sea vegetables and grass-fed, lean animals that your ancestors gathered or hunted. Your biological ancestors instinctively learned to use naturally-protective antioxidants from freshly gathered plants, such as wild greens, to protect their oxygen-based life processes. Their bodies also learned to use naturally-protective phytonutrients from freshly gathered plants to protect and restore their cells, brains, vital energy, digestive tracts, organs, and communication networks from daily wear and tear, plus eliminate ever-lurking bacteria, viruses, parasites, yeast overgrowth, and carcinogens. Food has always been, and always will be, the best medicine.

Our species, *Homo sapiens*, managed to evolve to meet the challenges of hungry predators and a hostile environment. We were, and are, the most complex physiological species, and consequently we are the most vulnerable. Our modern-day eating patterns are counterproductive! In only 50 years, we have reached the point where we run our miraculous engineering on empty calories and troublesome nutrients that were never part of our genetic makeup or natural origin.

Faulty eating signals

Researchers at the University of California discovered that our drive for comfort foods is built in. Rats under chronic stress that were given the option of high-nutrition rat chow or a mixture of lard and sugar headed for the latter every time. And their choice actually did lower their stress-hormone levels. In terms of evolution, the response makes sense: If a hungry predator is chasing us, easily digested and high-caloric foods like fat and sugar give us quick fuel for a speedy escape. "In a sense," explains Norman Pecoraro, PhD, co-author of this study, "it's a survival appetite," but only temporarily. "In the long run," Dr. Pecoraro quickly adds, "opting for fat and sugar will cause you to tip your energy balance negatively. Too much caffeine only increases the jitters. Alcohol lifts and then drops spirits, and hunger and thirst are themselves stressful. Eating regular meals and snacks throughout the day of high-fibre, slowly digested, healthy, cell-friendly foods keeps your blood sugar even, which keeps your energy and mood boosted."

Adapted from The Path to Phenomenal Health *by Sam Graci (John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd., 2005) Sam Graci presents* Be Inspired to Achieve Phenomenal Health *at the Vancouver Health Show, October 29, 11-11:50 am, Theatre One, Canada Place.*

Microwaving is not cell-friendly

The *Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture* studied the effects of various cooking methods and the reduction of nutritional value. All cooking breaks down the nutritional values of food to certain degrees. Microwaving, used in 91.3 percent of North American households, destroys 97 percent of the life-saving antioxidants, and between 74 and 87 percent of the healthful polyphenols. Microwaving is the worst depleter of nutrients. Lightly steaming food maintained the highest nutritional value and maximized flavour – followed by pressure cooking and boiling.

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Wanderin' Wind

by Jaminie Hilton

Jaminie Hilton is the winner of the August Story Slam. SS is held on the second Wednesday of the month at Our Town Café, 245 E. Broadway. For information, contact Johnny Frem at 604-254-0355 or via www.boltsoffiction.com

Ten-year-old Jodi raced down the stairs, pulling on her T-shirt as she hurtled toward the kitchen. She took the second flight two steps at a time, feeling the thick carpet give way beneath her bare feet. Still zipping up her jean shorts, she sprinted the last five steps across the cool, marbled hallway. She whirled around the doorway into an empty kitchen, planning the quickest way to make a Saturday morning surprise pot of coffee for her mom and thought, Dad's gone. I bet he's already at his office.

As she pulled the clay coffee jar toward her, Jodi noticed the box of stationary. The lid was off, and the satin ribbon attached to the box curled across the counter. A row of brightly coloured flowerpots stood along the bottom edge of each sheet. One parchment page had been crumpled into a ball.

A week ago, Jodi had given that writing paper to her mom for her birthday. She remembered how her mom had put down her glass of wine to open the box, and smiled at her, touching the flowerpots with her long dancer's fingertips. Now the early sun blazed like fire through the glass kitchen door, lighting the edges of the balled up paper on the counter. Jodi pulled open the parchment, trying to smooth the creased flowerpots as she stared at her mom's writing sprawled above them.

"Dear Jack and Jodi: I'm sorry. I can't stay. It's not good for any of us. Take care of each other. I'll call. Love, Julia."

Jodi's stomach jumped and clenched, and her legs wanted to crumple like the paper. A whiff of her dad's cologne rose faintly from the page. Where was he? She ran out of the kitchen, past the tall grandfather clock, click-clacking in the hallway, hauled open the heavy front door, and stared at the driveway. His car was there, but her mom's van was not in its usual spot beside it. She turned and bounded up three flights of stairs, two and three steps at a time, to her parent's room. The sheets and blanket were heaped at the foot of the empty bed.

In the mirrored dressing room, Jodi lifted the crystal stopper from a perfume bottle and breathed in her mom's rich, rose scent until it filled and held her. Then she searched through the black lacquer jewelry box. The turquoise necklace her dad had given her mom last week for her birthday was missing. Jodi pictured her mom wearing it as she drove away from them, pressing the blue-green stone against her heart until it turned her around and brought her back.

Jodi flew out of the bedroom, down the stairs, and out to the backyard. The new rosebush, bought yesterday, stood in its green plastic pot, and the flowered mug leaning against it still held a few inches of wine. Her mom knew the name of every rose in her garden. This one had golden stems in the centre of deep pink petals. The instructions on the paper tag described the sunlight and water it needed. Its name was Wanderin' Wind.

Last night, her mom had tucked her in promising they would plant the Wanderin' Wind together. Jodi had fallen asleep, telling herself she had to wake up at eight because otherwise there wouldn't be enough time. Once her mom emptied the coffee from her flowered mug down the drain, and started splashing in the red, vinegar-smelling wine, all plans and promises began to leak out of the day. With each refill from the bottle she kept under the kitchen sink, her mom's eyes would look further away, staring more deeply into her own distant unhappiness. Jodi pictured her mom pulling out the weeds that closed in on her roses, bending low, talking in breathless spurts about Jodi's dad as she yanked up the unwanted plants. Those days Jodi had felt as invisible to her mom as the grass blades under their feet.

The shovel was heavy, but Jodi raised the handle and plunged the tip into the hole her mom had started. She lifted out three piles of dirt, and then looked from the hole to the plastic pot, trying to guess if the plant would go in. When she grabbed the bush, a thorn stabbed her thumb. She had forgotten the padded gloves.

When she turned toward the house, her dad came out through the kitchen door, striding toward her, pushing up the sleeves of his crisp, lavender shirt. His light blue eyes, which burned like dry ice when he argued with her mom, were bloodshot and wobbling in tears. He bent toward her, putting his hands on her shoulders.

Jodi stood stiffly. She said, "You promised you would spend more time with us."

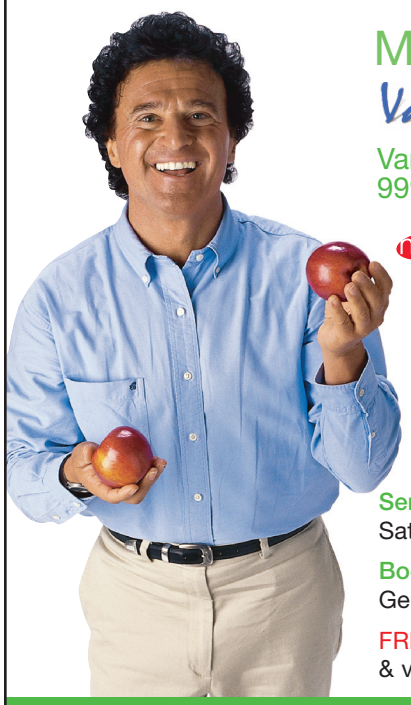
The smell of his dry-cleaned shirt made her long to let the scents of starch and cologne cradle her. Maybe later she would curl herself into his warm arms.

"I need the gloves," she said, holding out her hand with a spot of blood forming on her thumb.

When her dad came out again, he was shoving his tie into his pocket and pulling on the gloves. With one foot anchoring the plastic container, he lifted the bush and lowered the roots in their pot-shaped clump of earth into the hole. Jodi patted the ground smooth around the Wanderin' Wind. She would water it, keep away the weeds, and prune off the dead roses. When her mom saw the crowded flowers, she would smile, fingering her turquoise necklace, and burying her nose in the petals. She would pick one perfect bloom and hold it out. And as Jodi took it, her head would fill with the homemade-ice-cream-sweetness of roses opening around them.

Wanderin' Wind *is the heart of Jaminie Hilton's novel in-progress. Combining her creative skills with her practice as a therapist, Jaminie facilitates a story time for grownups program. Email healing.jaminie@shaw.ca*

Get on THE PATH TO PHENOMENAL HEALTH



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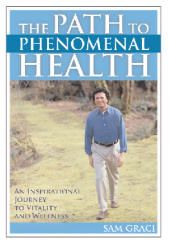

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On our cover

Freelance photojournalist Alex Felipe shot our cover photo at Toronto Harbourfront this past summer. For Felipe, the photo represents "a fun, summer shot, of a girl under a big blue sky…hope for healthy people on a healthy earth." Felipe is a member of the GlobalAware photojournalist collective (www.globalaware.org).

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continued from page 12

reaction. When these samples were supplied with radioactively tagged nutrients, there were no reactions, consistent with the organic chemistry interpretation. Levin also discovered that the reactions seemed critically sensitive to a heating between 46 to 51 degrees, the range that might kill living organisms, but which have no effect on most inorganic compounds.

Orthodox NASA scientists viewed the labelled release findings as the result of highly reactive compounds, called superoxides and peroxides. According to Levin and his colleague Patricia Ann Straat, these are entirely theoretical constituents of the Martian soil, for which there is no evidence. He also noted highly reactive chemicals such as these decay in the presence of water, one of the additions to the nutrient. NASA decided that the evidence for life on Mars was ambiguous, and like most big bureaucracies, erred on the side of conservatism. (That may be the most charitable interpretation of the official response.)

Arguing that their data deserved a better hearing, Levin and Straat carried their battle into the pages of obscure scientific journals, becoming in the process, *personae non gratae* within mainstream planetary science. Levin received no further invitations to NASA events. The agency even tried to block his efforts to negotiate with Russians to include his LR Experiment on the Mars Polar Lander mission in 1996.

Levin assigned one of the team to go out and get a bottle of champagne. They had yet to perform a control experiment, but Levin was already confident that life had been discovered on another world.

All this begs the question: if the LR experiment indicated a strong possibility for the existence of microorganisms on Mars, why would NASA be so opposed to this interpretation, when the presumed purpose of the Viking Mission was to search for life? One possible reason is that, at the time, reigning theories of exobiology ruled out cold planets with thin atmospheres as potential sources of extraterrestrial life.

The other reason may involve non-scientific belief systems. Levin told author DiGregorio of attending a 1961 meeting on space biology with Dr. Philip H. Abelson, editor of the preeminent journal *Science*, in which he overheard Abelson say: "The Bible tells us there cannot be any life on other planets – this is a waste of time." Levin was "shocked" by this, and not surprisingly. DiGregorio noted: "It was under Abelson as editor that *Science* rejected two of our scientific papers on the possibility of having detected life on Mars."

Mars: The Living Planet supplies troubling anecdotes suggesting that the fix was in for the Viking Mission from the start. When the first images from Mars arrived at JPL headquarters, they revealed a multicoloured landscape eerily reminiscent of Arizona, complete with a blue sky. NASA staffer Ron Levin (no relation) looked on in amazement as a technician went from monitor to monitor, changing the settings so that the landscape and sky presented a uniformly orange and red appearance. Levin followed the technician, changing the settings back, only to be "chewed out" by James S. Martin Jr., Viking project manager.

Gil Levin later discovered that the order to change the monitor settings came from the top. One can only speculate why NASA wanted the Earth-like scenery twiddled with. (A few colour-true pictures from NASA, which show untouched images of blue skies, are now in circulation in books about Mars.)

In all NASA missions subsequent to Viking, not a single one has carried life detection equipment to settle the debate. Yet, the walls may be cracking. A full 25 years after the Viking Landers first settled down on the Red Planet, Levin's data got another look. Joseph Miller, PhD, associate professor in the department of cell and neurobiology at the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California, examined the data from the original LR experiments. Miller, who worked with NASA in the '80s, did some number crunching. He discovered something in the data that no one else had detected, including Levin and Straat: a highly periodic gas release, characteristic of the metabolism of living organisms. In a university news release from July 2001, Miller announced: "The signal itself not only had a circadian rhythm, but it had a precise circadian rhythm of 24.66 hours – which is particularly significant, because it's the length of a Martian day."

"I think back in 1976, the Viking researchers had an excellent reason to believe they'd discovered life," said Miller. "I'd say it was a good 75 percent certain. Now, with this discovery, I'd say it's over 90 percent. And I think there are a lot of biologists who would agree with me."

NASA's much-ballyhooed "Mars meteorite" from 1996, containing what some scientists consider fossils of microorganisms, evidenced a shift in thinking in the agency, though certainly not seismic in scope. More recent announcements from NASA, concerning the geological formations on Mars, which reveal ancient river channels and lake beds, indicate that many astronomers now favour the hypothesis of a once watery planet. NASA seems less resistant to the idea of microbial life on the Red Planet now than in the '70s. Still, a plaque mounted near the Viking Lander exhibit at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum holds to the official line on results from the Viking's life detection experiments: "The biological experiments on the Viking Landers did not detect any positive signs of life or any of the organic compounds that are abundant on earth."

Vancouver writer and political cartoonist Geoff Olson can be reached at gefo@telus.net

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